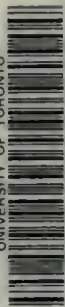


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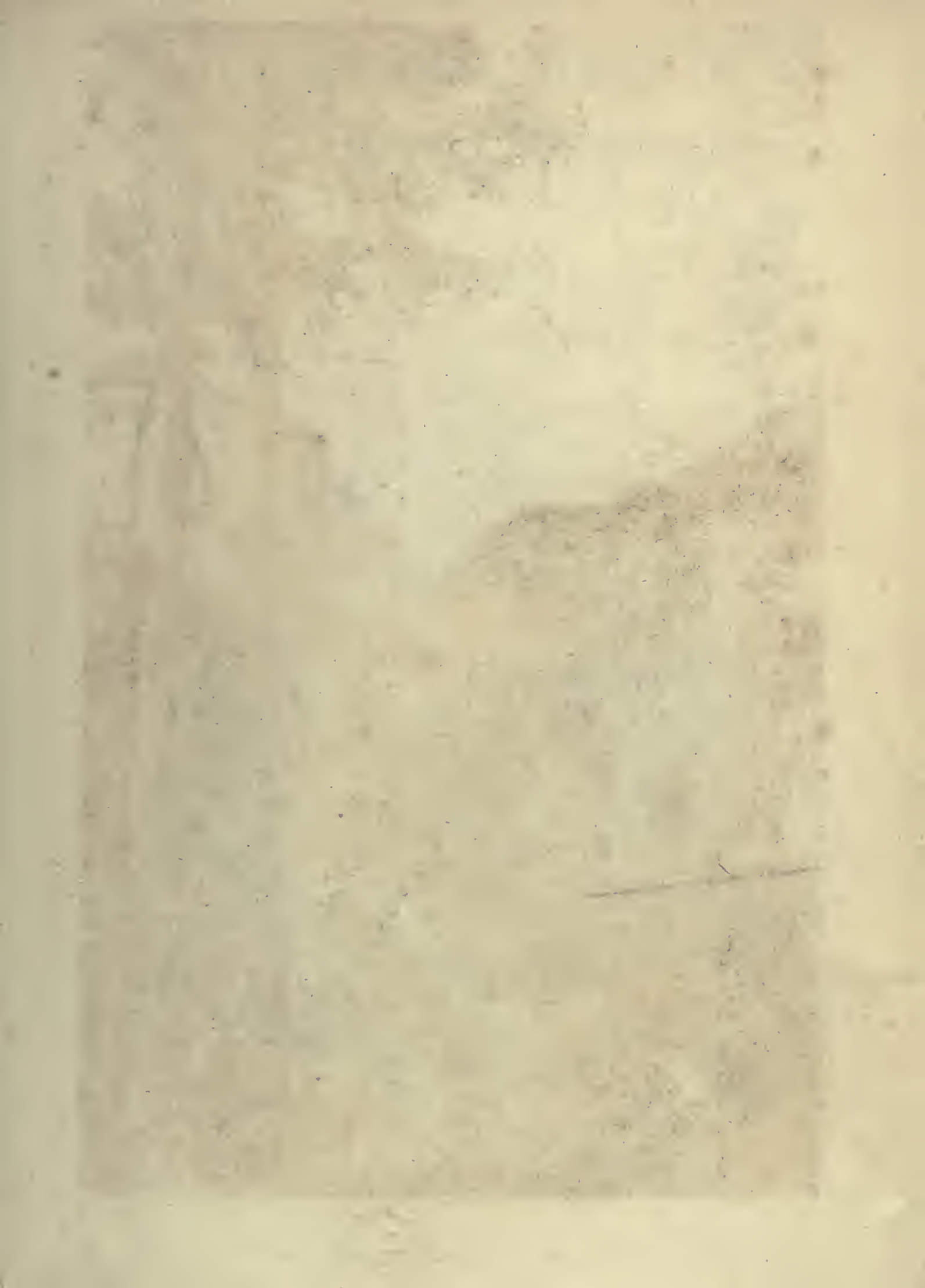
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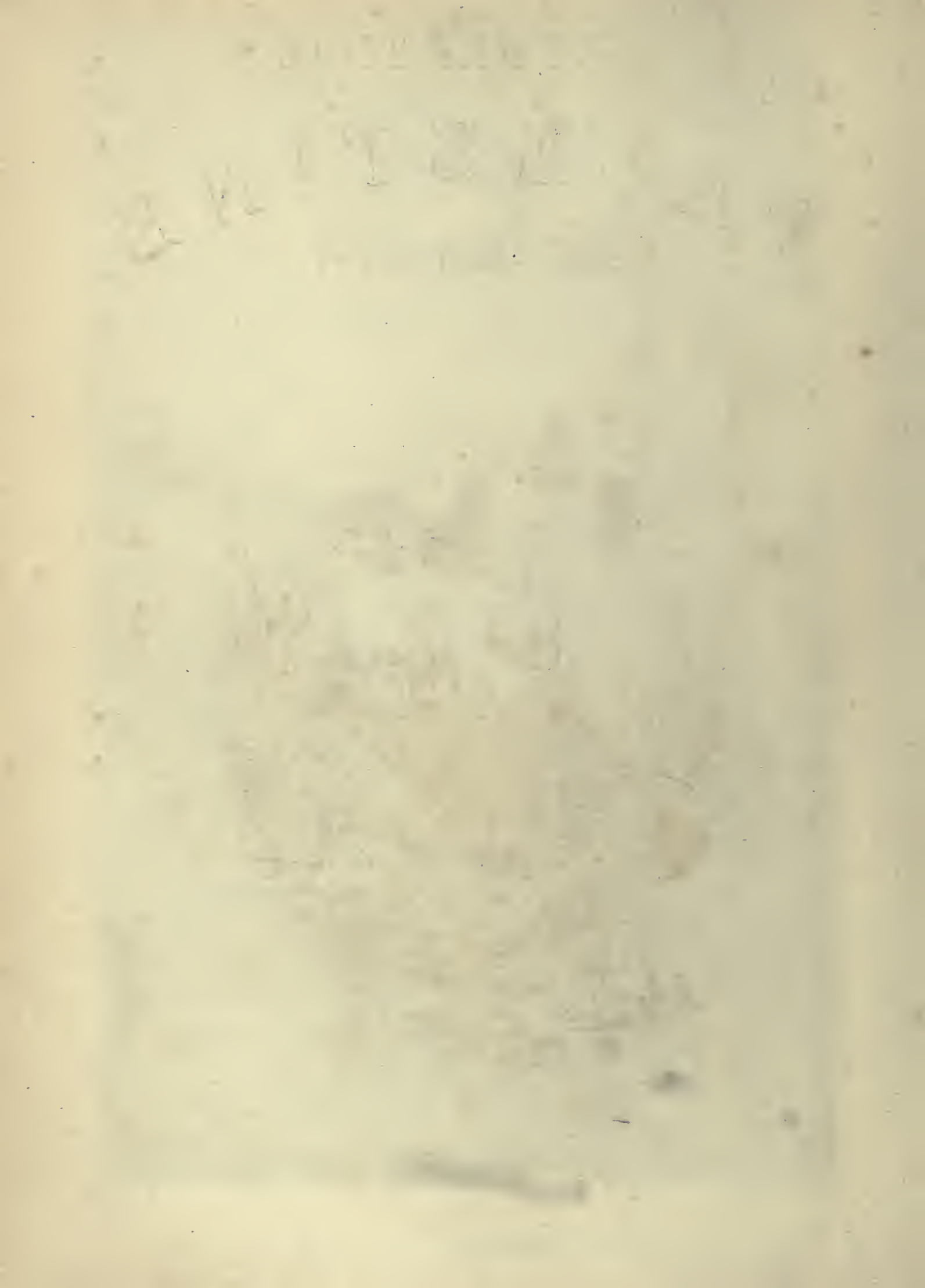


H. FENN. PINX.

S. BRADSHAW. SCULPT.

THE GORGE OF THE KADISHA - LEBANON.





PICTURESQUE
PALESTINE,
SINAI AND EGYPT.



The Convent of St. Catherine. Mount Sinai

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PICTURESQUE PALESTINE

SINAI AND EGYPT

EDITED BY

SIR CHARLES WILSON, R.E., K.C.B., F.R.S.

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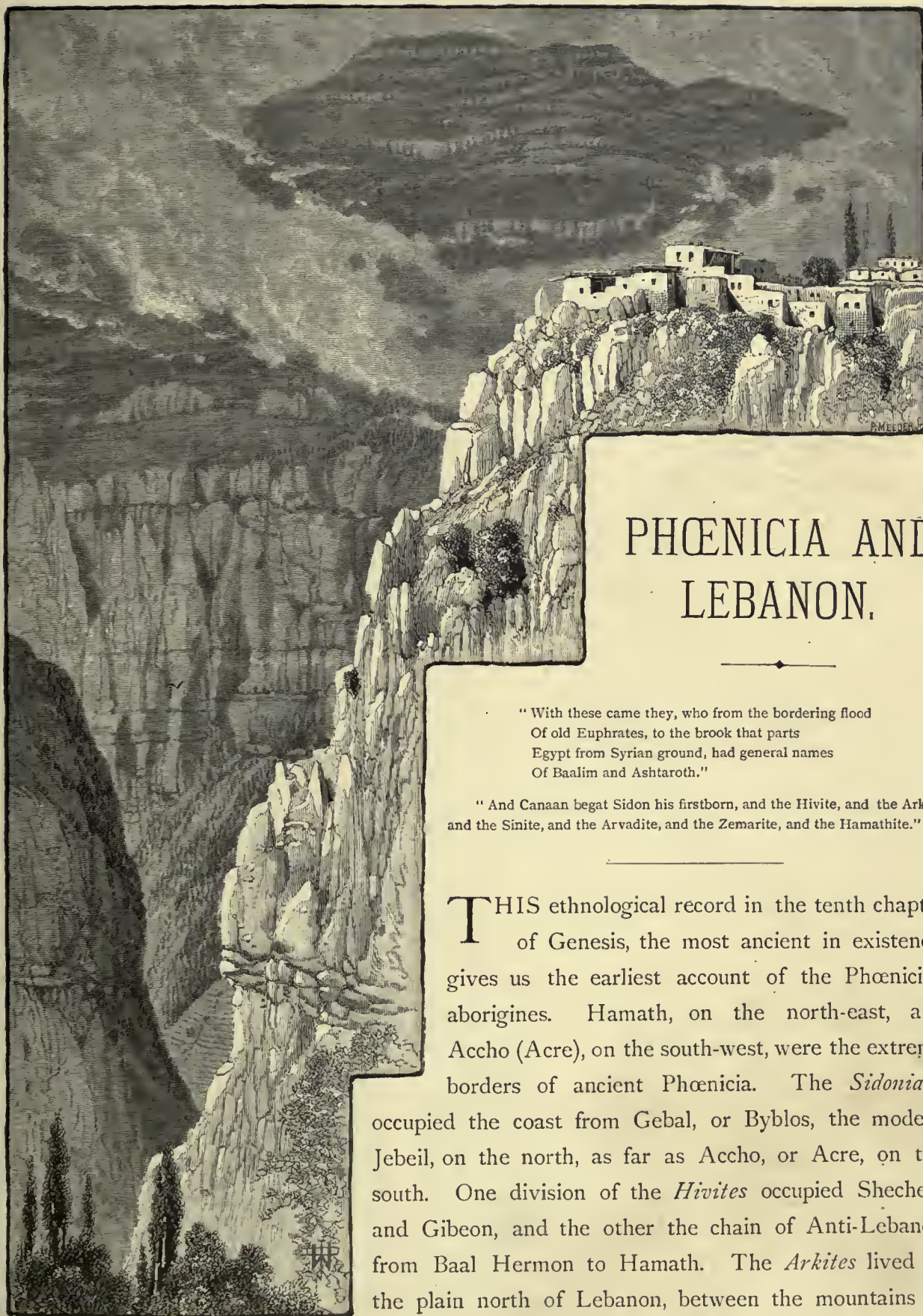
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PHOENICIA AND LEBANON.

" With these came they, who from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates, to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth."

" And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and the Hivite, and the Arkite,
and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite."

THIS ethnological record in the tenth chapter of Genesis, the most ancient in existence, gives us the earliest account of the Phœnician aborigines. Hamath, on the north-east, and Accho (Acre), on the south-west, were the extreme borders of ancient Phœnicia. The *Sidonians* occupied the coast from Gebal, or Byblos, the modern Jebeil, on the north, as far as Accho, or Acre, on the south. One division of the *Hivites* occupied Shechem and Gibeon, and the other the chain of Anti-Lebanon from Baal Hermon to Hamath. The *Arkites* lived in the plain north of Lebanon, between the mountains of Akkâr and the Nahr el Kebir, their name still remaining in the Tell and river of Arka.

HASRÛN, A MARONITE VILLAGE
Of North Lebanon, on the summit of a precipice on the
south side of the gorge of the Kadisha (the sacred
river).

One of the most striking historic names in Northern Syria is Kûl'at Kadmûs, about twelve hours south-east of Ladaktyeh, probably the former home of Cadmus, who first brought letters into Greece.

In prosecuting our journey through Phœnicia from north to south we will begin at the northernmost relic of Phœnician architecture in Syria, the secluded "Husn Suleiman." In company with the Rev. S. Jessup, of Tripoli, and Professor Dodge, of the S. P. College in Beirût, we visited this then unexplored and comparatively unknown ruin a few years since. We spent Tuesday night at Mahardee, near the castle of Seijar, on the Orontes, north-west of Hamath; and on Wednesday took a south-west course to the foot of the Nusairiyeh mountain range, then ascended a rocky precipitous steep, several hundred feet in height, through tangled forests of oak, to the summit of the range near 'Ain esh Shems, or Fountain of the Sun. Farther to the west we rode down a narrow valley to 'Ain ez Zahib, or Gold Fountain, and then turning southward over a high rounded ridge, came suddenly in sight of the green secluded vale in the midst of which stand in weird solitude the ruins of "Husn Suleiman." The ruin is of unknown origin and of great antiquity. Like Ba'albek, it is of three styles of architecture, the colossal Phœnician, the Greek, and that of the Crusaders. There are two quadrangular courts a short distance from each other and quite distinct. The southern or larger one is a rectangle of four hundred and fifty feet long by two hundred and eighty feet wide, with a wall formerly forty feet in height. In the centre of each side is a great portal ten feet wide, twenty feet high, and eight feet thick. On the soffit of the east and west portals is an immense eagle with a caduceus in his talons and a retreating Ganymede on either side. The work resembles that at Ba'albek, but is far less elaborate. We spent six hours in sketching the ruins, and the engravings from these hasty sketches (in the Second Statement of the American Palestine Exploration Society) were the first pictures of the ruins published in Europe and America. The lintel over the eastern gate is a monolith twenty-one feet long, ten feet wide, and five feet high. It is chastely carved with a cornice of dice and flowers, with a king's head in the centre. On each end is a winged image in high relief, draped from the waist down, supporting the upper portion of the cornice on his shoulders, the arms being uplifted. At the bottom of the cornice is a Greek inscription, which reads somewhat thus: "Theobaitus possessed it. Servants of his household built it in the 682nd year." The cornice of the western portal has alternate dice, flowers, and grotesque faces in relief. The lintel of the east gate alone remains perfect; the western is broken in two pieces, the northern in three, and the southern has fallen.

Inside the northern portal, on a tablet six feet by three, is an inscription in Greek and Latin. The Latin inscription has been translated by Dr. Ward. It states that the Emperor Valerianus and his son Gallienus and grandson Saloninus intrusted the province of Asia to Marcus Aurelius and others, &c., commanding them to see that the distant kingdoms over against the turbulent Parthians remain to them intact. The date is between 253 A.D. and 259 A.D., but the inscription is evidently of far later date than the building, and was not improbably cut in a tablet from which an older inscription had been effaced.

The rectangle is built of huge stones, the largest of which on the north-east corner is thirty feet long, nine feet nine inches high, and four feet seven inches wide, and at an elevation of thirty feet from the ground on the inside. The most of the stones are of similar dimensions, some thicker and narrower and some shorter and wider. Those on the south side have a wide coarse level or draft, and unfinished attempts at a moulding on the top of some of them.

The quarry is on the slope of the hill a few rods from the north-east corner. The north-east corner block has a rude lion carved in high relief on its northern face. The corresponding block on the north-western corner has a lion standing by a cypress tree. This style of rude ornament is still in use among the Syrian stonemasons, and even the Arab women use the lion and cypress tree in decorating the interior mud walls of their rude houses. On both the inner and outer sides of the north portal are niches with canopies for statues. On the inside was once a portico forty-five feet wide and seventeen feet deep. Its roof and columns are fallen and mostly buried beneath the débris. The capitals of the pilasters on the main wall are early Corinthian.

In the southern central part of the rectangular area is the Ionic temple, its cella being seventy-five feet by forty-five feet. To the north are two flights of steps of the width of the temple, covering a space sixty feet in length northward. The temple is built of the same light-coloured limestone with the court, but the blocks are much smaller, varying from six to ten feet long, and from three to four feet in breadth and thickness. It is surrounded by half columns, which become at the corners three-quarter columns. There are four at the south end and five on each side, all being three feet five inches in diameter and twenty-seven feet high. In the interior lie piles of fallen blocks and half columns in utter confusion. In the winter a fine fountain gushes out from under it, and in its original state the fountain was doubtless, as at Fijeh (see page 202, vol. ii.) and Afka (Apheca) (see page 16), the attractive feature of the spot, and connected with the worship of those ancient days, now so completely enwrapped in mystery. The water is sweet, cold, and pure; it escapes from beneath the western wall of the enceinte, its former place of exit being buried beneath the débris.

The northern ruin is also a rectangular enclosure, standing north-west of the great court, and at an angle with it. It contained several small temples, one on the south-east corner, another at the south-west corner, and one outside the western wall forty-five feet by fifteen feet. Behind the platform at the south-west corner are the pedestals of numerous columns, which may have surrounded the cella of a temple whose portico occupied the platform. The little temple on the south-east corner has a portico thirteen feet by twenty-six feet, and twenty feet high, now in ruins, and a vestibule twenty-six feet by forty feet. The portal between them is seven feet wide by ten feet high, its lintel being a monolith thirteen feet long, having an unfinished moulding and cornice, with an egg cornice under the dice and flowers common to the portals of the great court, and a spread eagle above. The stone above the lintel is fifteen feet long. The stones are laid up without mortar, and beautifully joined, like those in Ba'albek and Palmyra. The only building laid up in mortar is the ruined Crusaders' Church on the eastern

side, with its apse towards the north-east. A semicircular projection of the northern wall would indicate the apse of some former edifice within the wall at that point.

The whole mass of ruins is a mystery. It was evidently one of the holy places of the Arvadites, at once a temple and a stronghold. M. Ray, of Paris, in his report on the remains of the military architecture of the Crusaders in Syria, styles this place the best specimen of *τεμενος* that exists in Syria. Its name, "Solomon's Fortress," would indicate the prevailing ancient tradition as to its origin. The whole Arab race believe Ba'albek (see page 215, vol. ii.) and Tadmür (Palmyra) (see page 191, vol. ii.) to be the work of Solomon aided by the genii, and this Phœnician quadrangle very naturally bears his name. It is not impossible that when Solomon went to Hamath Zobah and built store cities or magazines for storing grain in this district, his men may have made this a store city. The word Hamath means *Husn*, or fortress, and the fame of Solomon must have extended through this entire region, then inhabited by the Phœnicians and Hittites; and it is no improbable supposition that this retired and almost inaccessible spot may have been selected as a stronghold in which to store grain for his subjects in Northern Syria, or even as a military fortress. The small temples were probably of much later date.

Leaving this lovely valley we rode to Burj Safita, the "Castel Blanc" of the Crusaders, and now, with its Protestant church and schools, a veritable white spot in this dark mountain. Thence, on the 1st of June, we rode down for six hours over the undulating chalk hills towards the coast, when suddenly we came upon the modern town of Tartûs, the ancient Antaradus of the Phœnicians. The town contains about one thousand five hundred people, four-fifths Muslims and one-fifth Greek Christians. The majority of the people live within the walls of the castle, an immense structure, whose vaulted halls and chapels, built by the Crusaders, are still in excellent preservation. The castle stands on the seashore, protected from the waves by a massive sloping buttress. On the land side the castle was surrounded by two walls and two moats, one between the walls and one beyond. These are in fine preservation, especially on the north-east side. The ancient structures are solid and beautiful, the modern of the most abject character.

Taking the Arab shakhtûr, or sloop, which plies between the town and its insular sister, we sail across the two and a half miles of sea to the ancient island of Arvad, now Ruâd. This island is three-quarters of a mile in circumference, with a population of two thousand. It was surrounded by a wall intended to serve as a fortification, and a dyke to protect the town from the sea. A portion of the wall still remains, composed of blocks of stone from fifteen to twenty feet in length. The finely drafted stones indicate its Phœnician origin. The rock interior is full of cisterns to supply water to the inhabitants. The inscriptions in Greek begin with the words, "The Senate and People," &c. On the north-east side was the harbour, formed by two moles built of immense stones brought from the quarries at 'Amrit. The present population are chiefly fishermen, whose boats supply fish to Ladakiyeh, Tripoli, and even Beirût, and carry lumber from Mounts Casius and Amanus to the cities of Southern Phœnicia.



THE VALLEY OF THE KADÏSHA (THE HOLY RIVER),
With a distant view of the Mediterranean Sea and El Mîna (Minet Tarâbalus), the port of Tripoli.

After the union of Arvad with the Sidonians it still retained its own king as a vassal of the Phœnician monarch. To this brave and hardy insular population, who vied with the Tyrians and Sidonians for the palm as navigators of the Mediterranean and Black Seas, belonged the two towns opposite on the coast, Antaradus (Tartûs) and Marathus ('Amrit), where are found the most perfect, important, and beautiful remains of Phœnician architecture.

The trip to Ruâd can be easily made in the summer months, and generally in the spring, unless the wind blows a gale, as the sailors of Ruâd are skilful and perfectly fearless.

From Tartûs we rode southward along the coast to 'Ain el Haiyeh and 'Amrit. It was the time of wheat harvest. The whole country was golden yellow with the ripened or newly harvested grain, and the muzzled oxen were treading out the corn on the circular earthen threshing floors. South-east of Tartûs stands the Cathedral of the Crusaders, a fine edifice one hundred and thirty feet by ninety-three feet, divided into nave and aisles by two rows of clustered pillars. As is usual in the Syrian cities, this grand Christian edifice is now the property of the Muslims, and we found a Muslim sheikh seated on a mat teaching a dozen little unwashed boys to read the Koran. It is partly roofless, but not an utter ruin. It is a painful and interesting sight, yet such sights abound through this entire region from Aleppo to Tripoli.

The beautiful lordly castles of the French and English Crusaders, with their Gothic chapels and spacious halls, are now turned into stables or filthy hovels, or used by Turkish mudirs and their zabties and servants.

Leaving the Tartûs Cathedral, we reach in one hour the ruins of 'Amrit, so thoroughly explored by M. Renan, and which he has admirably illustrated in the plates of his "*Mission de Phœnice*." The ruins of 'Amrit are peculiar and striking, being the most perfect Phœnician structures in Syria. There are three lofty massive monuments, one of which is composed of a pedestal sixteen feet square and six feet high, with sculptured lions at the corners; on this stands a monolithic shaft fourteen feet high. The second has a pedestal fifteen feet square and ten feet high, on which stands a huge cylindrical block, and the whole is surmounted by a cone-shaped stone, the extreme height being thirty-three feet. Beneath each structure are sepulchral chambers hewn in the rock, with loculi of a large size, measuring eight and a half by three and a quarter feet. The third is partially destroyed. Lenormant regards these cone-shaped monuments as having a peculiar meaning in the ancient Baal-worship—"At Paphos, the stone representing Ashtoreth was of a conical form." In the island of Malta, in one of the Phœnician sanctuaries, was a very lofty semicircular recess, which was the "Holy of Holies," and "in Giganteja there was found in this recess the conical stone which, as at Paphos, was the emblem of the nature goddess." "We cannot enter here on an explanation of the brutal and obscene symbolism that was the origin of this representation of the divinity by a conical stone. Two monoliths, or enormous stone cylinders, terminated at the summit by a cone or a rounded cap, called by the Arabs of our day 'mughazil' (spindles), were placed like the Egyptian obelisks before the temple of Atargatis at Bambyce. Probably there were some also at the temple of

Melkarth at Tyre, for in the temple of Jerusalem (an exact reproduction of its arrangements), in order to efface all vestiges of a symbolism so contrary to the spirit of the worship of Jehovah, they were replaced by the two columns with bronze capitals, Jachin and Boaz. Three monoliths of the same type are still to be seen among the ruins of Marothus ('Amrît)."

It is probably impossible for one in our day to imagine the depth of immorality and abominable licentiousness which was inwrought in the very spirit and fibre of the old Phœnician Baal-worship.

" Baal next, and Ashtaroth,
And all the idolatries of heathen round,
Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes."

Around their religious system gathered, in the external and public worship, a host of frightful debaucheries, orgies, and prostitutions in honour of the deities, such as accompanied all the naturalistic religions of antiquity. Creuzer, as quoted by Lenormant, says, " This religion silenced all the best feelings of human nature, degraded men's minds by a superstition alternately cruel and profligate, and we may seek in vain for any influence for good it could have exercised on the nation." Their human sacrifices to Baal Mólach were followed by feasts in which deep sorrow and frantic joy alternated. The Phœnicians are described by ancient writers as both unruly and servile, gloomy and cruel, corrupt and ferocious, selfish and covetous, implacable and faithless. It is well for us to have these peculiarities of the old Baal-worship in mind as we are proceeding on our journey south through the maritime cities, the Lebanon strongholds, and the characteristic temples of the ancient Phœnicians.

Just to the north of the three conical symbolic shafts of 'Amrît is the extraordinary rock-hewn temple of "'Ain el Haiyeh," or Serpent Fountain. The name is appropriate to the place, for no part of Syria is more infested with venomous serpents than these cretaceous hills along the coast of the Arvadites. On every journey in this region we hear stories of their ravages. While riding ahead of my companions near this very temple I heard a sudden rustling in the wheat stubble; my horse started back, and I saw a repulsive-looking snake about two feet in length, of a dark yellow hue, and about as thick as my wrist from head to tail, floundering along towards a *rejme*h, or stone heap. The boy with us exclaimed, "Beware, a serpent!" It was of the most venomous character. Michaud relates, in the history of the Eighteenth Crusade, that when the Christian army remained three days on the banks of the river Eleuctera (Nahr el Kebîr), fifteen miles south of 'Amrît, they were assailed by serpents called *tarenta*, whose bite produced death. The Crusaders were stricken with terror, but the remedy proposed by the natives surprised them even more. It was of a nature so vile as to remind one of the abominable rites of the ancient Baal-worshippers of the same plains.

On the north-east of the fountain is an excavation a quarter of a mile long, cut in the rock, ninety feet wide at the top, descending in steps to the bottom. The rock-hewn temple consists of a court one hundred and fifty feet square, cut nine feet deep from the ledge of rocks, smoothly hewn on the floor, the north side being cut away to form an opening towards the stream. In the middle of the northern opening a square block of the native rock is left, sixteen and a

half feet square and nine feet high. On this are four huge blocks of stone, one at each side, one at the back, and over them a colossal mass fourteen feet by twelve and a half feet,



CONVENT OF THE MULLAWIYEH, OR DANCING DERVISHES, TRIPOLI,

With a distant view of the snow-crowned summits of Lebanon. In the foreground flows the Kadisha (the sacred river), called also Nahr Abû Ali. On the pathway may be seen a water-wheel and two millstones.

and seven feet thick, concave below, forming a canopy over this immense throne. Here once sat the chief idol of the Arvadites. Around the ruins are ancient sarcophagi, ruined

walls, and signs of an ancient town. The site is beautiful. To the south the green plain of Akkar extends for miles, sweeping around the curving level shore in graceful perspective to the cape and islands of Tripoli, thirty miles away. Beyond, to the south-east, rise the snow-



THE CASTLE OF TRIPOLI, A STRONGHOLD OF THE CRUSADERS.

It was converted into an imperial penitentiary by Midhat Pasha, when he was Governor-General of Syria. It stands on a narrow ridge, which slopes on the west towards the town, and on the east to the bed of the Kadisha.

crowned summits of Northern Lebanon (see page 8), while to the west sparkle the blue waters of the Bahr er Rûm, "Sea of the Greeks" (the Mediterranean) (see page 5).

Three hours south of Tartûs a magnificent fountain of crystal water rises up from a circular basin, about twenty rods from the seashore, and flows down in full volume to mingle its waters with the sea. This is the famous 'Ain el Hishy, notorious for ages as the resort of highwaymen and cut-throats, who hid themselves in the low copse along the shore and waylaid the passing

traveller. The Turkish Tartar postmen, however well armed, were often shot by Nusairiyeh brigands in these dreary thickets. At the time of our visit a Greek merchant had built a house and was living here, and we spent the night unmolested. Not the least interesting feature in this region is the people who now inhabit it—the Nusairiyeh. They are justly regarded as the descendants of the old Canaanites, never converted to Judaism, Christianity, or Islamism, but retaining the old Baal and star worship of the Canaanites, with their sacred shrines in groves on “every high hill,” and at the same time having borrowed various features from both Christians, Muslims, and Jews. Ali is their God. When they speak of Allah they always mean Ali. They practise circumcision, use wine at their sacrament, a secret rite bound by terrific oaths, and their principal prayer is a series of dire curses upon all other sects. Their present name was derived from Abû Shuaib ibn Nusair in 840 A.D. They are a secret society with mysterious signs and passwords. When one of the initiated dies they believe that Mars or Jupiter descends and takes his soul to the sky, where it becomes a star in the “Darub et tibban,” the “Milky Way.” They believe in transmigration, and that the souls of Muslims pass into donkeys, of Christians into swine, of Jews into monkeys, and of Nusairiyeh into other men. Women are not allowed to be initiated into their secret rites, nor even attend their worship. “Devils were created from the sins of men, and women from the sins of devils.” The soul leaves the body through the mouth, and hence death by hanging is regarded by them with horror. The Turks look upon them as Kafirs, or infidels, and hence for ages have persecuted and oppressed them in the most cruel manner, driving them to desperation. Blood revenge and highway robbery are common. At present they are somewhat better treated, but their fertile mountains have been turned almost into a wilderness. Native writers on the Nusairy religion insist that the initiated sheikhs offer their wives to their guests when visiting each other, but this is not confirmed by credible testimony. Physically they are a fine race. Some of their sheikhs are men of splendid personal appearance, and their girls and boys who have enjoyed the advantages of education in the Christian schools at Ladikiyeh have proved themselves equal to any class of Syrian Arabs in intellect and capacity.

South of Tartûs we meet but few villages of the Nusairiyeh, and on entering the Lebanon district beyond Tripoli we find only a Mohammedan, Christian, and Druse population. Crossing the broad and fertile plain of Akkar, we reach Tell Arka, on a river of the same name, where dwelt the Arkites. The Tell is evidently the site of the old Arkite capital. Fragments of columns, sarcophagi, and blocks of stone lie scattered on the slope and in the deep rocky gorge of the river. A four hours' ride from this point takes us along the seashore, across the Nahr el Barid, and thence to the famous “'Ain el Bedawy,” or “Sheikh el Bedawy,” known as the “Mosque of the Sacred Fish.” Just below the road, down a grassy slope and on the edge of the rich green gardens and orchards of the Tripoli plain, is a circular birkeh, or pool, into which flows the clear sweet water of a fine fountain. The pool is about one hundred feet in diameter, and the water two or three feet in depth. In it are hundreds of fat light-coloured fish, from three to twenty inches in length, resembling river bass. They are

fed by visitors to the mosque, who come from Tripoli, three miles distant, and from the surrounding region on the religious fête days to make vows at the shrine of Sheikh el Bedawy,



THE CASTLE OF MUSEILIAH ("PLACE OF WEAPONS").

It stands on a precipitous rock by the Nahr el Jozeh, in the middle of a wooded valley, and commands the pass. It was until recently occupied by a band of brigands, the terror of travellers.

or receive a blessing from the sacred fish. These fish are regarded as inhabited by human souls, and killing them is looked upon as murder. The Muslims say that during the Russian

War not a few of them disappeared and went under the sea to fight the Russians. They claim that any one eating them will speedily die, but as I ate of them more than twenty years ago in the house of a Greek aristocratic family in Tripoli, I can confidently deny the assertion. The ride from this point to Tripoli is a delightful one. With dense olive orchards on the right towards the sea, and fig and mulberry gardens on the left, we ride along the level macadamised road, the white roofs, domes, and minarets of Tripoli gradually rising in the foreground, until our horses' hoofs clatter on the pavement at Bâb et Tibbaneh, and we enter this peculiarly Oriental



city. It seems a strange and sudden transition to glance from the ancient khans, Muslim tombs, vaulted streets, and crowding throngs of Bedawin and Nusairiyeh cameleers to the brilliantly painted and gilded cars of the Tripoli tramway, which here has its eastern terminus. It is the East and the West in conjunction, the Syria of the past and the Syria of the future. Tripoli was probably founded about 700 B.C., but it has no continuous history. The Seleucid prince, Demetrius I., erected a palace here, which was succeeded by splendid edifices erected by the Romans, but owing to frequent and destructive earthquakes few traces of the ancient city

remain. The Muslims occupied the town at the time of the Islamic invasion, but the



THE NATURAL BRIDGE OF AKURA.

In front of a vast cavern from which issues a stream called the Neb'a Ruweis, a tributary of the Adonis (Nahr Ibrahim).

Crusaders failed to capture it until five years after their arrival at Antioch in 1104. When the Christian army finally took the city, a valuable library of one hundred thousand volumes was destroyed. This famous library, celebrated through all the East, contained the monuments of the ancient literature of the Persians, the Arabs, the

Egyptians, and the Greeks. A hundred copyists were constantly employed in transcribing manuscripts. The Kadi sent into all countries men authorised to purchase rare and precious books.

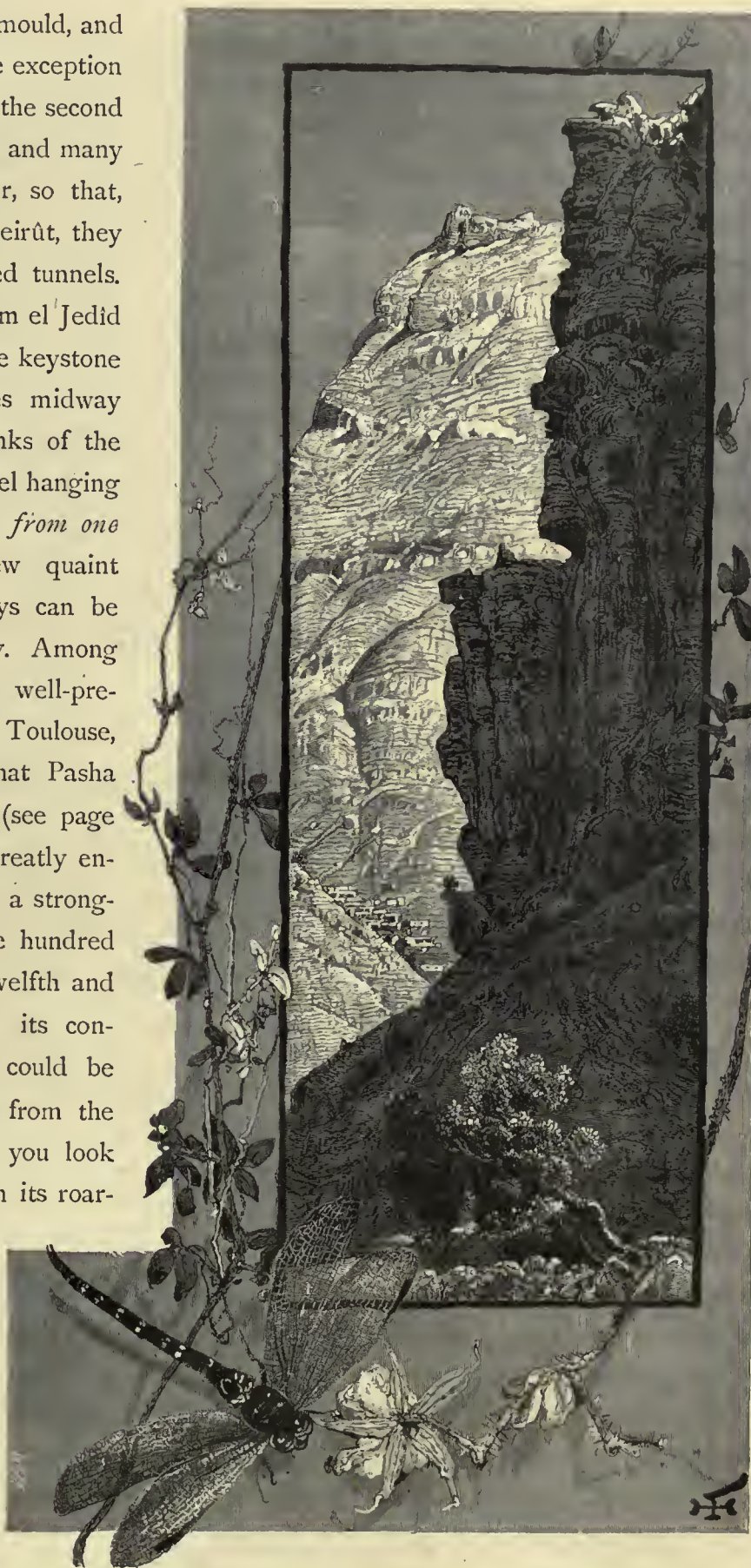
After the taking of the city a priest attached to Count Bernard de St. Gilles entered the room in which were collected a vast number of copies of the Koran, and as he declared that "the library of Tripoli contained only the impious books of Mohammed," it was given up to the flames. Ibn Abû Tai says that the library contained three million volumes, and that the Christians exhibited at the taking of Tripoli the same destructive fury as the Arabs had done who burned the library of Alexandria. Novaïry fixes the number of volumes at one hundred thousand.

In 1289, when the city was destroyed by the Sultan Kilawûn, it was said to have contained four thousand looms for the weaving of silk, and the *zinnâr* Tarâbulusy, or Tripoli silk girdle, is famous even to the present day. The Arabs call the city Tarâbulus, the Arabic form of Tripoli. The Turks usually speak of it as "Kochuk Sham" (Little Damascus), and it is well worthy of the name. It stands on the eastern extremity of the triangular plain, a mile wide, at the base of the elevated plateau called El Kûra, from one hundred to three hundred feet high, which reaches to the foot of the Lebanon range (see page 5).

The sacred river Kadisha, which rises at Bsherreh, just under the cedars of Lebanon (see page 237, vol. ii.), runs twelve miles through a wild ravine to the plain, then cuts through the plateau for eighteen miles in a deep gorge to Tripoli (see pages 1 and 5), where it breaks out into the level plain, forming a tortuous and picturesque valley, at the mouth of which, on both sides of the river, the city of Tripoli is built (see pages 8 and 9). The roaring Kadisha, called by the Muslims Abû Ali, runs through the city, crossed by two stone bridges, besides the new bridge of a tramway farther down the stream. On the right bank, the houses on the hill are chiefly rough structures of the Maronite fellahin; those below, between the river and the Bab Tibbaneh, being Muslim. The Christian quarter is on the left side of the river, and stretching far to the southern Blacksmith's Gate is the populous Muslim quarter. The population consists of twelve thousand Muslims, four thousand Greek Christians, five hundred Maronites, and a few Protestants, Papal Greeks, and Jews. These sects live in distinct quarters, and the different trades of the city, as in Damascus, occupy separate streets.

From a fine fountain five miles south-east of the city, the water of the Zghorta river is brought in an aqueduct, which crosses the Kadisha a mile from the city on the Kunatîr el Brins, or Prince's Arches, a structure dating back to Raymond of Toulouse, Count of Tripoli. The distributing reservoir is a small room below the castle, whose floor is punctured with holes a few inches in diameter, through which the water flows in earthen pipes to all parts of the city. Every house, mosque, and khan has its *anbûb* and *birkeh*, in which the water runs constantly day and night, giving a cheerful aspect to the houses, refreshing in summer, but chilling and damp in the winter. The houses are built of the yellow porous sandstone from the reefs along the seashore, and there are few dry houses in the city. The ground floors are

often green with damp and mould, and the entire population, with the exception of the poorer classes, sleep on the second floor. The city is well paved, and many of the streets are arched over, so that, as in Sidon and intramural Beirût, they have the appearance of vaulted tunnels. Over the door of the Hammam el Jedid is a curious stone chain. The keystone of the arch, two arch stones midway down the arch, the huge links of the chain, and a massive stone tassel hanging in the middle, are all *carved from one block of stone*. Not a few quaint Saracenic arches and doorways can be seen in various parts of the city. Among the objects of interest is the well-preserved castle of Raymond of Toulouse, recently transformed by Midhat Pasha into an imperial penitentiary (see page 9). It was either built or greatly enlarged by Raymond, and was a stronghold of the Crusaders for one hundred and eighty years during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Before its conversion into a prison, access could be obtained to the charming view from the top of its walls. On the east you look down into the river gorge, with its roaring waters, the Mullawiyeh Convent, and the orange groves, with snowy Lebanon in the background piercing the clouds (see page 8). On the west, the verdant plain, the blue sea in the distance, its shore broken by the Mîna, or marine city, and the five old towers along



CLIFFS OF AKURA, IN THE MOGHERÎYE VALLEY, LEBANON.

Every available space in this valley is cultivated. On the ledges of the cliffs fruit-trees flourish and wheat is grown.



THE FOUNTAIN OF AFKA (APHECA).

Source of the Adonis (Nahr Ibrahim). Close to this spot are the remains of a famous Temple of Venus, which was destroyed by order of Constantine.

the northern beach, while the snow-white roofs, walls, domes, and minarets of the city form the foreground at your feet. From a residence of several years in Tripoli, I can testify to the ever-changing beauty of its scenery, the lusciousness of its fruits, as well as the courtesy and hospitality of the better portion of its people. Passing beyond the castle, and descend-



THE VALLEY OF THE ADONIS (NAHR IBRAHÍM).

The scenery of this valley is not surpassed by any in the Lebanon. The hillsides are in many places clothed with pines and oak-trees, and groves of mulberry and fruit-trees border the stream.

ing rapidly into the gorge of the river, you walk for a few minutes among trees and flowers and murmuring waters to the convent of the Mullawiyeh dervishes, who perform their sacred dances every Friday afternoon, at certain seasons of the year. I have seen it crowded with men below and women above behind the latticed screen, when eight or ten of the dervishes whirled in the literally giddy mazes of the dance for two hours, until the performers fell on the floor exhausted, and the audience retired. This charming spot is a favourite resort of the Tripolitans, and in the month of April, when the orange and lemon groves below and around are in full bloom, and the air filled with the delicious fragrance, this quiet retreat is a place one never wearies of visiting (see page 8).

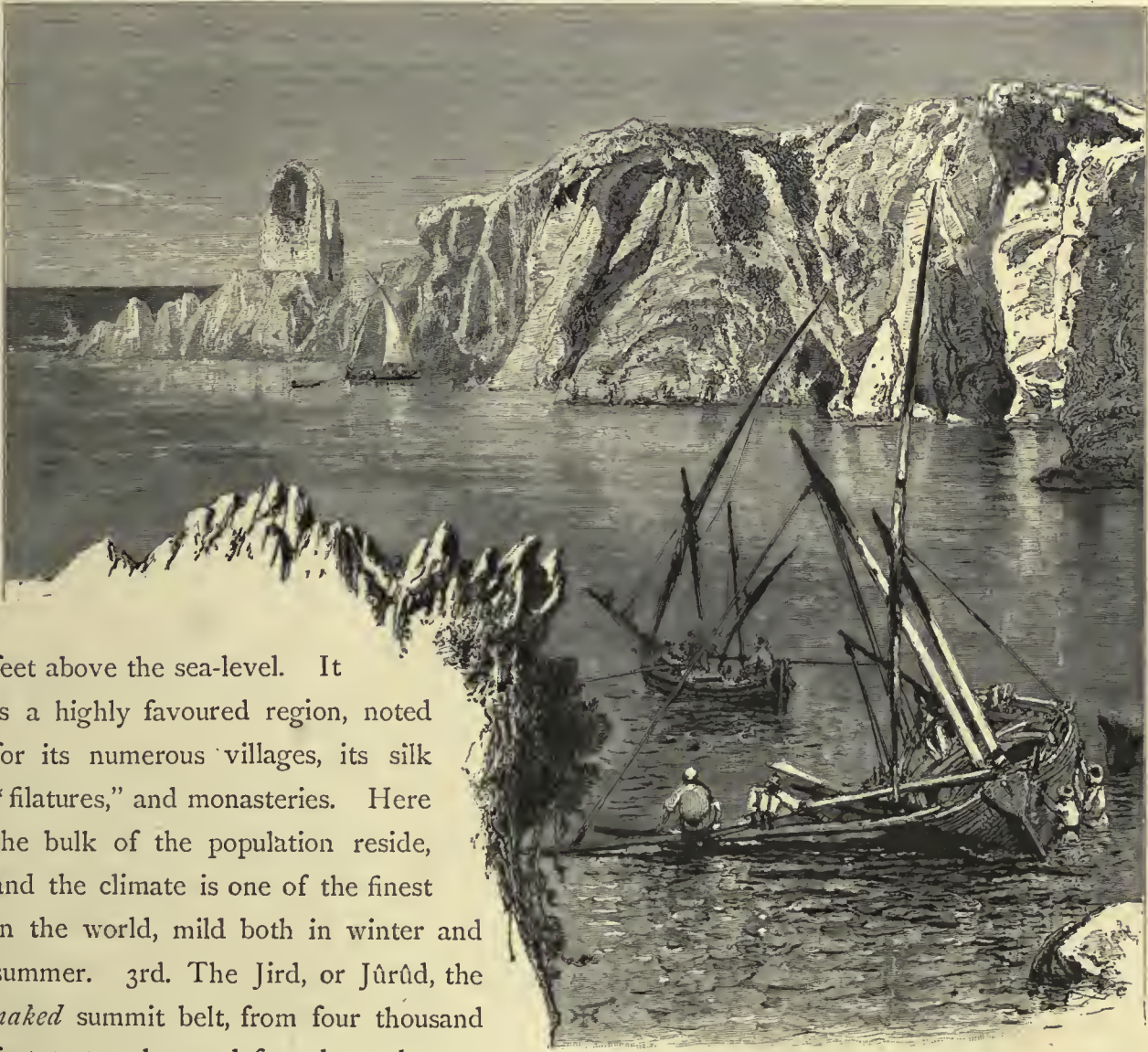
Between the mouth of the Kadîsha, on the northern shore, and El Mîna, are several fine towers of cut stone, standing like sentinels along the shore. They are called Burj Ras en Neb'a, Burj es Seb'a (Lion's Tower), Burj et Takîyeh (Traveller's Rest), Burj el Mugharibeh (Algerines), and Burj esh Sheikh Affân. These are evidently mediæval structures, and were built on foundations made up of ancient granite columns and fragments of Greek and Roman edifices. They are now being rapidly razed, to supply stone for more modern structures.

El Mîna (see page 5) has a population of seven thousand, chiefly Greek fishermen and sponge-divers, who obtain an ample livelihood from their laborious and perilous profession, the sponge crop amounting to £20,000 a year. The steel-tracked tramway from Tripoli passes down the broad level road between the gardens to the Mîna gate, and thence to the seashore.

The modern Tripolitans are proud of their fine scenery, their gardens and sparkling waters, their fruits and flowers, their sea and mountain landscape. The Greco-Syrian women of Tripoli are noted for their beauty, and not a few of them are acquiring, through education in Christian schools, the higher charm of intellectual and moral cultivation. The Boys' High School and the Female Seminary, on the American mission premises, are affording the youth of both sexes good advantages for education. The French Sisters of Charity have also an institute for girls. The Orthodox Greeks have opened schools, and the Mohammedans have formed a "Society of Benevolent Intentions" to maintain schools for girls and boys. The proposed railway from this point to Hums (Emesa) and the Euphrates valley will, if completed, make Tripoli the most important commercial port on the entire Syrian coast.

The range of Lebanon, extending for a hundred miles, is a great treasure-house of interest in its geology, botany, ethnology, and archæology. Its lofty summits, its frightful chasms, its deep caverns and subterranean lakes, its magnificent fountains and cascades, its noble cedars, its vineyards, walnut and olive groves, its ruined temples and nameless vestiges of hoary antiquity, its monasteries, churches, khulwehs (Druse chapels), and palaces, its geological structure, its one thousand two hundred villages, and its peculiarly Oriental population, combine to make it a fruitful theme of study, alike interesting to the passing traveller and the most scholarly and patient explorer. Lebanon, the White Mountain, or Mont Blanc of Syria, receives its name from the gleaming white limestone rocks. The Arabs divide Lebanon into three longitudinal belts or zones—the Sahil, the Wâsat, and the Jird. 1st. The Sahil is the littoral or maritime,

which we may call the *Palm-tree* belt, extending from the sea-level to an elevation of about one thousand five hundred feet. On this belt are the cities of modern Phœnicia—Tripoli, Jebeil, Beirût, Sidon, Tyre, and Acre. It is the most fertile in soil, salubrious in climate, and attractive in scenery. The palm, olive and mulberry, orange, pine, lemon, apricot, oak, peach, grape, and Pride of India abound. 2nd. The Wâsat, or medial zone, which we may style the *Walnut* belt, extends from an elevation of one thousand five hundred feet to four thousand



feet above the sea-level. It is a highly favoured region, noted for its numerous villages, its silk "filatures," and monasteries. Here the bulk of the population reside, and the climate is one of the finest in the world, mild both in winter and summer. 3rd. The Jird, or Jûrûd, the *naked* summit belt, from four thousand feet to ten thousand feet above the sea,

which we may call the *Cedar* belt, includes the cedar groves, many of the ice-cold fountains, and the great desert solitudes of the highest ranges. It is of vast extent, running for a hundred miles north and south, and contains some of the finest scenery in the world, although scant in its vegetation.

Before the massacres of 1860 Northern Lebanon was under a Maronite kaimakam, and Southern Lebanon under a Druse, an arrangement well calculated to keep the population in a

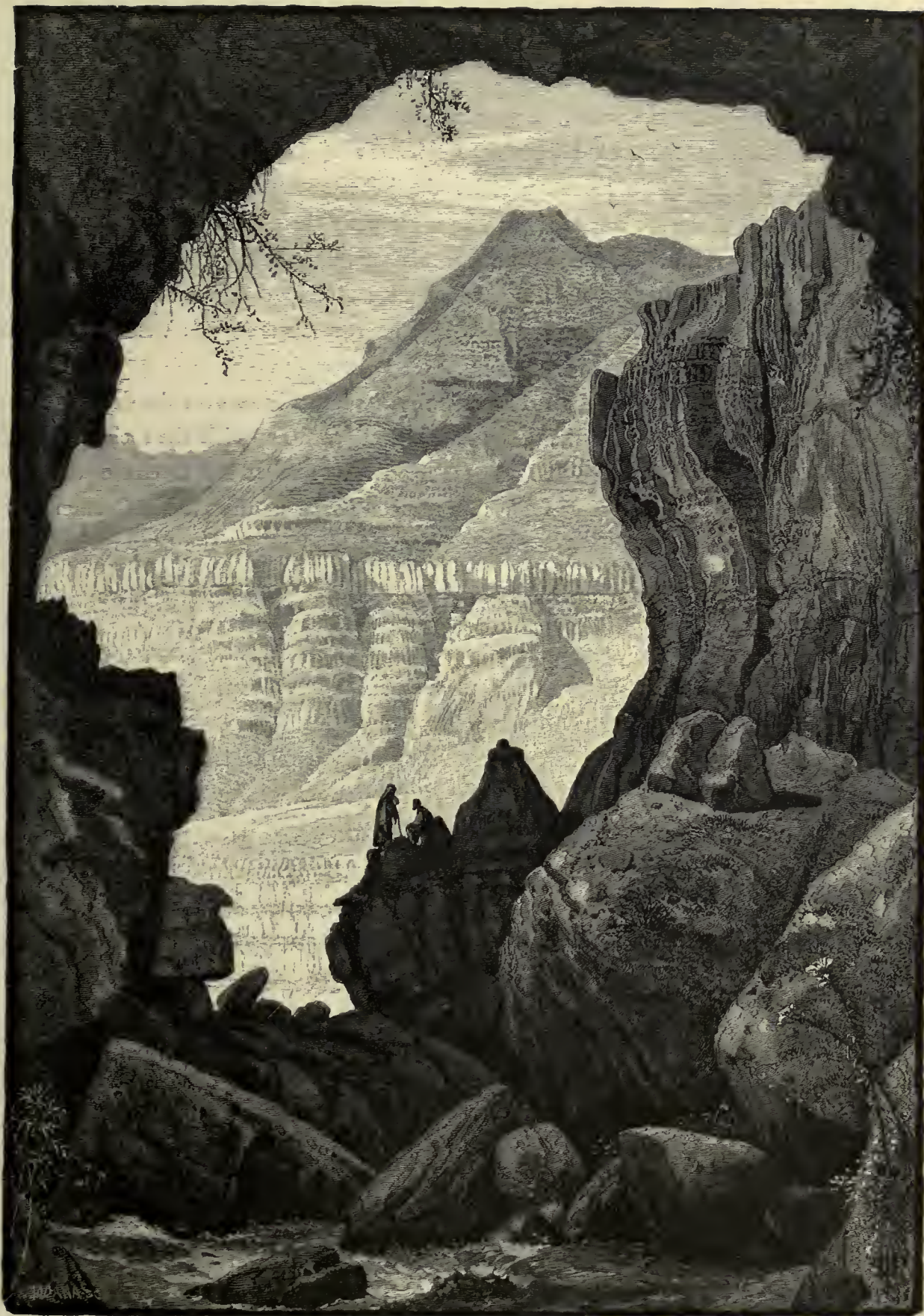
LEBANON COAST NEAR THE MOUTH OF THE ADONIS RIVER.

The iron-stained soil of the sandstone strata is annually washed down into the river by the heavy winter rains, and the discoloured stream can be traced far out in the blue sea. This gave rise to the belief that the river was tinged with the blood of Adonis every year, in memory of his death.



THE NATURAL BRIDGE, LEBANON.

It is called in Arabic "Jisr el Hajr" (the Bridge of Stone). It spans the chasm through which flows the Neb'a el Lebban (Fountain of Milk), one of the sources of the Nahr el Kelb (the Dog River).



UNDER THE NATURAL BRIDGE, LEBANON.

The stream, after passing under the bridge, descends the mountain-side through a glen like a huge fissure, and then dashes over a ledge of rock in sheets of foam.

ferment and to obstruct the administration of justice. The Turks were determined to break up this European compromise and place an Osmanli pasha over the whole of Lebanon. The result was a bloody war, the frightful horrors of Deir el Kamr, Hâsbeiya, Râsheiya (see pages 133 and 138, vol. ii.) and Damascus (see page 177, vol. ii.), which forced the intervention of Europe, and resulted in the new Nizam or Règlement of Lebanon, which guarantees a Christian pasha for the whole mountain under the joint protectorate of the six European Powers. Under the pasha are several kaimakams, generally chosen from the most numerous sect in the locality. Rustem Pasha is noted for his uncompromising hatred of bribery, his even-handed justice, his efforts for civilising the people, and for road and bridge building in Southern and Central Lebanon. He promises like improvements in this well-nigh roadless district of Northern Lebanon.

Before ascending eastward to the cedar amphitheatre, let us cross over the dazzling white chalk cliffs of Râs esh Shuk'ah to the valley of Nahr el Jozeh and visit the rock fortress of El Museilihah (see sketch map, page 12). The Tripoli coast-road to Beirût crosses over this lofty promontory, called by the Greeks Theou Prosopon (Cape of the Divine Countenance), and down its southern precipitous face on a slippery road, which follows the deep ravines worn by the rains, and which change their course with every winter's storm. At the foot of this dangerous descent and on the right bank of the Walnut river, "Nahr el Jozeh," stands on an isolated mass of cretaceous limestone the ancient "Kûl'at el Museilihah" (see page 11). The name signifies "The Place of Weapons," and there is probably no pass in Syria, unless it be Wâdy el Kûrn, on the Damascus road, where more robberies have been committed. The castle is one of the most picturesque in the East, rising abruptly on its isolated rock, seemingly a part of the rock itself, surrounded by wide-spreading trees and murmuring waters, and overhung by lofty and precipitous chalk cliffs.

We now cross the Kûra Plain eastward to the fine village of Kesba, plunge into the ravine of the Kadisha, and begin the ascent to Ehden. This village is perched on a lofty spur of the Jird, nearly five thousand feet above the sea, and commanding one of the sublimest landscape views in Lebanon. The magnificent fountain at Mar Sarkis sends a deep, broad, and crystal stream of almost ice-cold water through and around the village, producing a luxuriant growth of walnut, fir, mulberry, pine, and oak, with summer vegetables in abundance; wheat, maize, and the potato being largely cultivated.

Ehden, or Eden, as it has been called, is the paradise of the Maronite priests, where, as in Bsherreh, Hasrûn, and Kesrawan, they hold undisputed sway; but, under the impartial rule of the present pasha, their former theocratic and despotic civil rule over the people has been reduced to a mere religious authority.

Our present limits will not allow more than a passing allusion to the history of the Maronite sect, now the dominant one in Lebanon. Their name is derived from Mar Marûn, a hermit who lived in the Bûkâ'a, near Neb'a el 'Asy, in the fifth century. His followers were condemned by the Council of Constantinople, A.D. 681, as holding the monothelite heresy, and, being driven from the cities and towns of Syria, they took refuge in the fastnesses of Lebanon.

They adhered to the Papal Church in 1182, and now pride themselves on their devotion to the Pope of Rome, yet it was not until 1438 that they consented to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope in matters of ecclesiastical discipline. Their parish priests are married men, and they use the Syriac language in their Church Service. Their patriarch yields only in dignity to the Pope himself. The present patriarch is Boulos (Paul) Butros Masaad, taking the name Butros (Peter) as an official title. Under him are thirteen bishops, one thousand priests, one thousand two hundred monks, six hundred nuns, and seventy-one monasteries. The Maronite people number two hundred and fifty thousand, the mass of whom are grossly ignorant. The immense revenues of the monasteries are devoted to the support of the monks and nuns or the private emolument of a few who control the monastic estates. The total number of monasteries of all sects in Lebanon is one hundred and seventeen, with two thousand five hundred monks and nuns.

Ehden, we have said, is a typical Lebanon village, with its Dar or great house, surrounded by the flat earth-roofed stone tenements of the peasantry, its numerous churches with their clear-toned bells, its village convent at Mar Sarkis, its copious water, its primitive oven, consisting of a large earthen jar sunk in the ground, its brawny youth, and buxom girls with their unique head ornaments of an inverted silver cup, over which the white veil is thrown, its comfortless houses in which the people sleep on the earthen floors, the cattle, goats, and sheep sharing the one large room with the husband, wife, sons, and daughters.



THE CHASM OF NEB'A EL LEBBAN.
Just above the Natural Bridge (Jisr el Hajr).

Yonder village of Hasrûn (see page 1) is noted for the beauty of its women and girls, many of whom, for a wonder, are light-haired and blue-eyed.

After two and a half hours' ride over the undulating moraines which extend east of Ehden, and form the curved shelf around the base of the encircling amphitheatre of giant mountains, we descry on our right, far down in the east end of the Kadîsha gorge, the large crowded village of Bsherreh, with its churches and convents, its water and trees, and east of it the roaring cataract which leaps down the rocks from the fountain of the sacred river. Still higher up, standing solitary and alone, is the dark compact cluster of trees known as the Cedars of Lebanon (see page 237, vol. ii.).

We hasten our pace, if it be in April, over the scattered snow-drifts and muddy fields, or,



ROMAN BRIDGE NEAR JUNEH.

It spans a little stream called Ma'amiltein, which in the winter flows from the hills to the beautiful bay of Juneh. Adjoining the bridge there is a Syrian khan.

if in August, over the dusty, parched, and cracked earth, to the sacred grove called "Arz er Rub," that is, "The Cedars of the Lord." There are three hundred and ninety-three trees, some ten or twelve of which are of giant girth, though the loftiest is not more than eighty feet in height. The twelve largest trees are called by the fellahin "The Twelve Apostles," and they have a curious tradition that our Lord and His apostles came to this spot and left their walking staves standing in the soil, which sprouted into cedar-trees. A Maronite chapel stands in the grove, and the patriarch claims the sole right to the sacred trees. The clergy have cultivated the superstition that those cutting the trees for fuel will be smitten with disease or calamity by the guardian divinity of the grove. It is pleasant to find that one at least of the thousand superstitions of Syria has been of some utility to the people in the conservation of

valuable trees.* The range of Lebanon for a hundred miles along the Jird was doubtless



LIMESTONE ROCKS, AJELTÛN, LEBANON.

In this district, well named Kesrawan (Broken Region), is a chaos of rugged mountains, which in some places assume grotesque and in others grand architectural forms. The belfry of the great Convent of Ajeltûn is shown in the background.

once covered with cedar forests. We have visited eleven distinct groves of cedars in

* H.E. Rustem Pasha, Governor-General of the Lebanon, has surrounded this grove with a well-built stone wall with two strong gates, and appointed guardians to prevent the ravages of the goats on the young trees, and to compel travellers to pitch their tents outside the enclosure.

Lebanon:—1. The ancient "Cedars of the Lord" above Bsherreh, three hundred and ninety-three in number (see page 236, vol. ii.). 2. The grove at the fountain of Ehden, fifty trees. 3. The great grove between El Hadeth and Niha, numbering tens of thousands of trees, covers an area of nearly twelve miles. 4. A smaller grove farther south on the summit and brink of the precipice. 5. The scattered trees above Duma. 6. The Ain Zehalteh grove of ten thousand trees, cut down by Murad Akil, and now growing up again. 7. A small grove on the cliff overhanging El Medûk. 8. A small cluster near Kûl'at el Bizzeh. 9. The fine grove of Mâsir el Fukhkhar, about three hundred trees, some of great size. 10. The forest of Jird el Barûk, thousands of trees. 11. The eastern grove of Barûk, about two hundred trees.

The first historical notice of the cedars of Lebanon is in the reign of David, when this monarch built himself a palace of cedar-wood (2 Samuel v. 11). Solomon caused cedars to be brought from Lebanon for the building of the Temple, and they were floated down the coast from Jebeil to Jaffa, after being cut by the "four score thousand hewers in the mountains." In 536 B.C. Zerubbabel hired the Phœnicians of Tyre and Sidon "to bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the Sea of Joppa." The cedar was also used in ship-building and in idol manufacture. Tiglath Pileser, after his successful campaigns against the Khatti and the Hittites and the subjugation of Carchemish, visited the Lebanon for the purpose of obtaining cedar-wood to adorn the temples and palaces of Kileh Shergat. The groves of Lebanon have thus been despoiled for three thousand years by the kings of the adjacent countries, until the upper ranges are quite denuded, and the voracity of the flocks of goats in nipping the tender shoots, and the rapacity of the fellahin, are preventing the growth of new forests from the seed. Were it not for the energetic action of the Lebanon Government the whole mountain would soon be stripped of its forest glory.

The geological formation of Lebanon is the lower cretaceous limestone with a stratum of ferruginous sandstone running through it almost from one end to the other, and here and there an outcropping of trap, amygdaloid or partially columnar. In the sandstone is a well-defined stratum of bituminous coal or lignite, which crops out at Kornâil and elsewhere in the district of El Metn, east of Beirût (see sketch map, page 12). The Jura limestone has been found by Professor Lewis, of the Beirût College, in but one place, at Mejd el Shems, on the southern slope of Mount Hermon, where the Jurassic fossils, such as half-crystallized Ammonites, &c., have been found in great profusion.

The strata of the Lebanon rocks, upheaved by mighty internal convulsions of nature, stand at every conceivable angle of inclination. On the very top of Ard Aklûk is a singular battlemented hill called Jebel Aklûk, looking in the distance like an artificial fortress. Passing around it on the west, we turn south-east and begin the four-mile descent to Akûra, which lies at the head of the great valley of Moghêriye, or "little cavern." To the east of the village rises a rock wall one thousand feet in height, through which a narrow chasm has been rent, opening a highway to the east, the shortest route from this point, *viâ* 'Ain Rûmeh, to the Cedars and to Ba'albek, *viâ* Yâmûneh (see page 15). The village is small, but the sides of

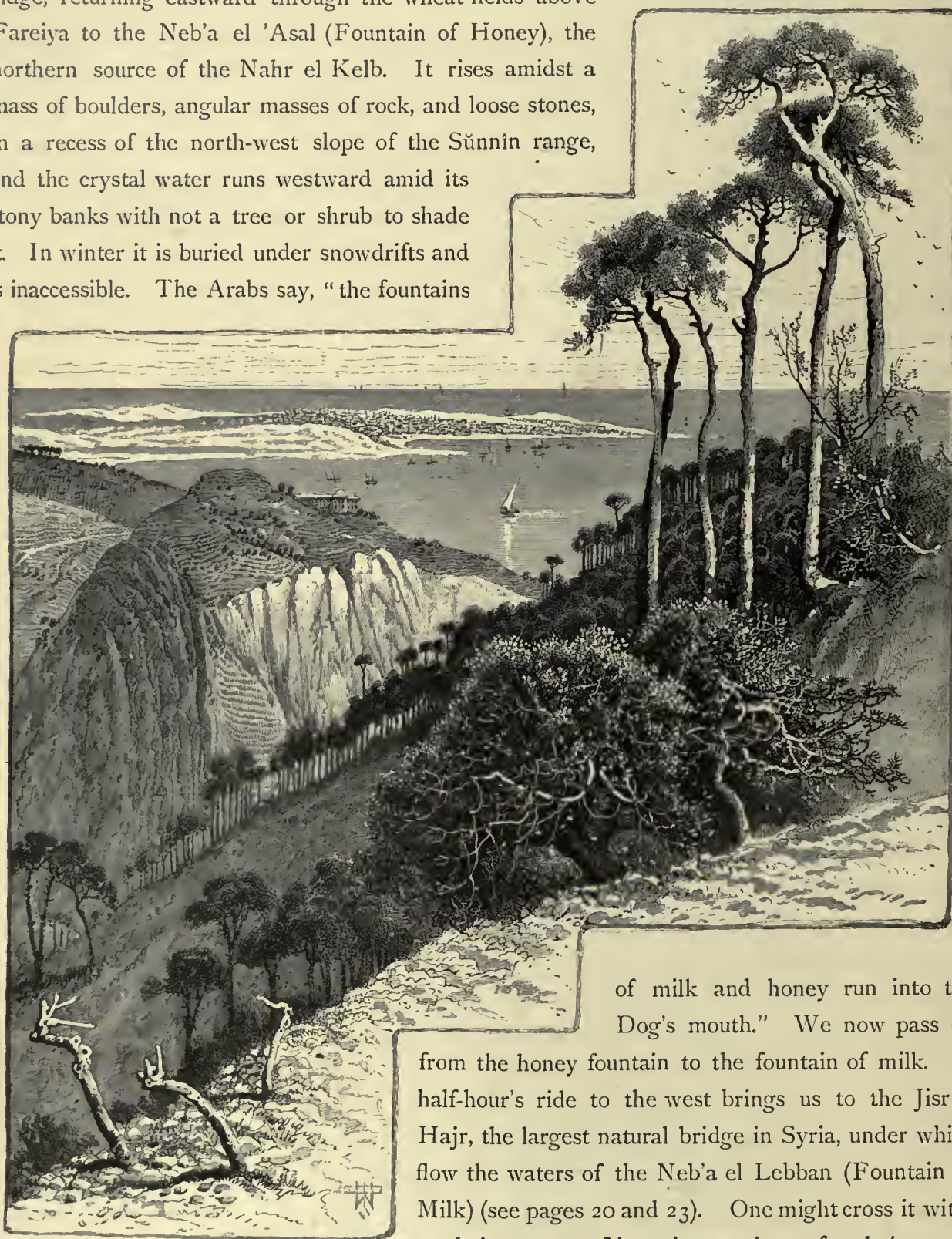
the valley below are everywhere cultivated and verdant in the summer, with mulberry, walnut, and other fruit-trees, and with fields of wheat and barley.

After a half-hour's ride southward along the base of the giant cliff overhanging the valley, we reach the natural bridge of El Akûra, over the mouth of a cave (see page 13). It is formed by a fallen rock which once evidently constituted the roof of the cavern's mouth, and has now settled down, covering the channel of the Neb'a Ruweis, which issues from the cave. Leaving our horses on the bridge, under the overhanging cliff, we took our staves to steady our steps over the mud-slimed stones in the bottom of the cave, and, lighting our wax candles, slid down the declivity into the mouth of the cavern. The roof is from ten to twenty feet in height, and we walked or groped along for four hundred feet, when the cavern suddenly divided into two branches, the one on the right muddy and rough, and that on the left clean, overarched with wax-like stalactites, and floored with stalagmitic mounds, between which, on a pebbly bed, runs a stream of water so crystal clear, that I stepped into a pool a foot deep, supposing it to be dry. We traced this bright gallery for about four hundred feet, when it terminated suddenly in a lofty arched room, whose perpendicular wall stopped our progress. But some twenty feet up the side of this wall is the mouth of another vast cavern, which could not be reached without ladders, and we were obliged to retreat.

From El Akûra (see page 15) to the fountain of Afka (see page 16) is a ride of an hour and a half along a tableland overhanging a valley covered with wheat-fields and scattered trees, until, turning to the south-east, we come to the Maronite village of El Mnetira, which faces southwards towards the fountain, to which we descend over a steep rocky road. This historic fountain of Afka (Apheca) issues from the cave, and from the limestone strata below it, which descend in stair-like gradations to the road, and below it to the deep gorge of the river Adonis (Nahr Ibrahim) (see page 17). The great cliff wall rises abruptly above the fountain from one thousand to fifteen hundred feet, and the water bursts forth from the recess formed by the sudden turning of the cliffs from a north and south to a westerly direction, and dashes down into a rock basin fifty feet below. We cross this basin on a bridge, which leads us to a ruined temple one hundred feet in length by fifty in width; this is without doubt the ancient temple of Venus, which was destroyed by the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century. A fountain still issues through the vaulted passage under the ruins, and there were probably artificial outlets for the water at various points under the temple. This is the principal source of the river Adonis of the ancients, and latterly known as the Nahr Ibrahim. Here was the scene of the ancient mythological fable of Venus and Adonis, and of the weeping for Adonis annually by the maidens of Phœnicia. The Lebanon maidens chanted, "I mourn Adonis; the fair Adonis is dead: dead is the fair Adonis, whom the gods lament." Adonis was Adôn, the Baal god, the sun—the same in meaning with Tammûz, the present Arabic name of the month July, which was the month of the feast of Adonis. The scarlet anemone of Lebanon was thought to be stained with his blood.

Leaving the Temple and Fountain of Afka (see page 16), we ascend gradually towards

the south-west and ride on by Neb'a el Hadid (Iron Fountain) and around the edge of the ridge, returning eastward through the wheat-fields above Fareiya to the Neb'a el 'Asal (Fountain of Honey), the northern source of the Nahr el Kelb. It rises amidst a mass of boulders, angular masses of rock, and loose stones, in a recess of the north-west slope of the Sünnin range, and the crystal water runs westward amid its stony banks with not a tree or shrub to shade it. In winter it is buried under snowdrifts and is inaccessible. The Arabs say, "the fountains

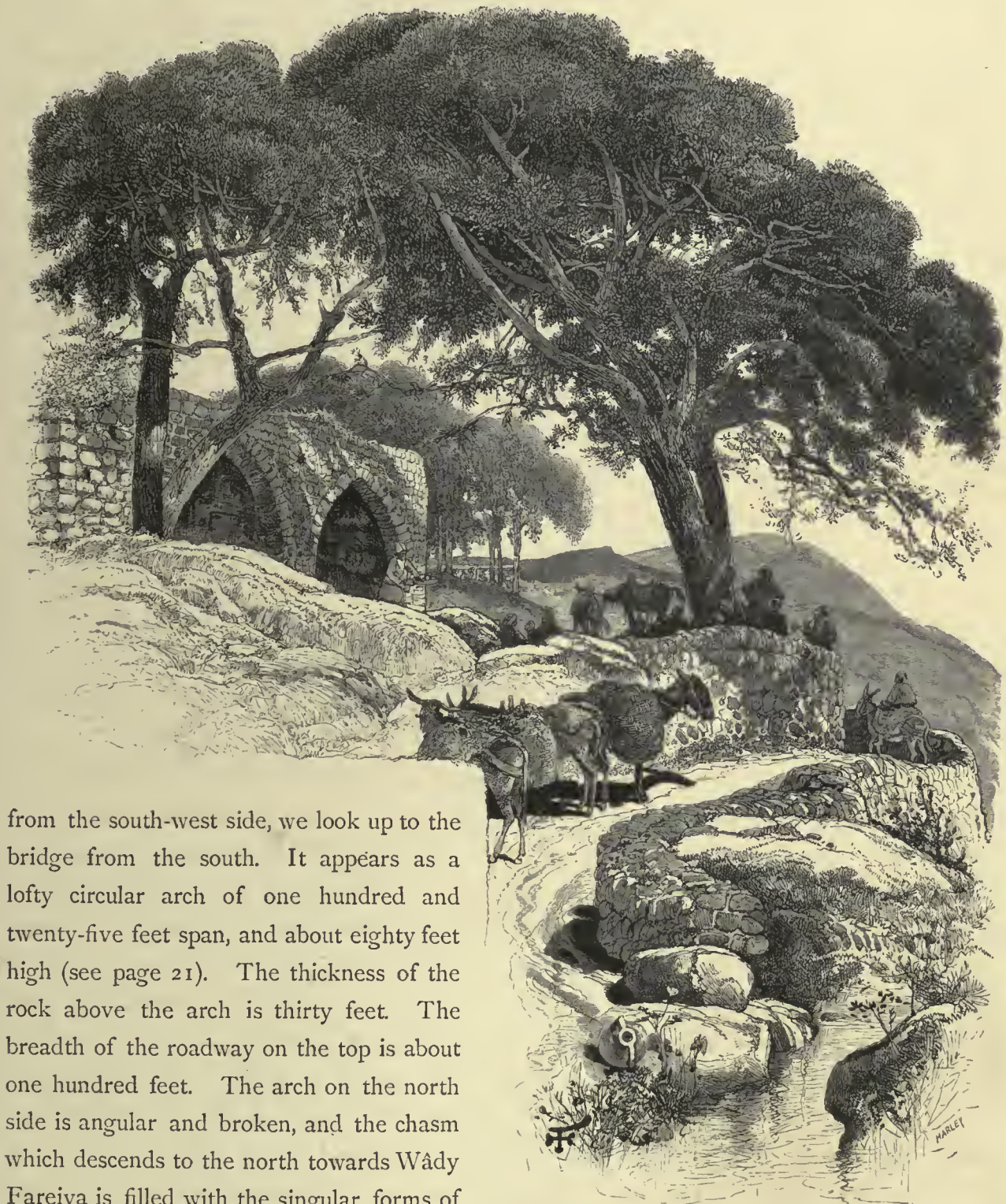


BEIRÛT, FROM JAITA,

A beautifully situated village north of the Dog River (Nahr el Kelb), on the heights above the gorge. In the distance, beyond St. George's Bay, the sandy promontory of Beirût appears.

of milk and honey run into the Dog's mouth." We now pass on from the honey fountain to the fountain of milk. A half-hour's ride to the west brings us to the Jisr el Hajr, the largest natural bridge in Syria, under which flow the waters of the Neb'a el Lebban (Fountain of Milk) (see pages 20 and 23). One might cross it without being aware of its existence, its surface being on a level with the fields on both sides. But a glance suffices to reveal the great chasm of the south branch of the Dog River, flowing from Neb'a el Lebban,

fifteen minutes farther up, under the base of the mountain. Climbing down into the chasm



from the south-west side, we look up to the bridge from the south. It appears as a lofty circular arch of one hundred and twenty-five feet span, and about eighty feet high (see page 21). The thickness of the rock above the arch is thirty feet. The breadth of the roadway on the top is about one hundred feet. The arch on the north side is angular and broken, and the chasm which descends to the north towards Wâdy Fareiya is filled with the singular forms of rock wrought out by the detrition of ages.

We follow the irrigating canal which carries the water of Neb'a el Lebban down through Upper Kesrawan, and hasten onwards to the great Convent of Ajeltûn, which stands in the midst of a singular region of projecting limestone rocks (see page 25). The strata stand

A LEBANON CAFÉ,
Pleasantly situated by a mountain stream and sheltered by the dense foliage of carouba trees (*Ceratonia siliqua*). The presence of one of these way-side resting-places always indicates a good site for an encampment, for it is sure to be near a supply of good water.

in a vertical position, and the rains and storms of centuries have worn away the softer parts, leaving the harder veins standing upright, often to a height of forty or fifty feet. They assume the most grotesque shapes, resembling "columns, blocks, houses, round and square towers, castles, fortresses," spires and shafts; and the road passes through the midst of them, sometimes by very narrow clefts. In the western part of the village is a good camping ground, but every available rod of soil is occupied by the mulberry, the staple product of this part of Lebanon. This district is the Kesrawan, or broken region, a chaos of rugged mountains, and the stronghold and holy mountain of the Maronites. Monasteries, nunneries, and churches are seen in every direction; the monks own the best part of the land, and the people are largely their tenants. The industry of the people is remarkable. They have quarried the rocks and built terrace walls like steps up the sides of these steep mountains, and wrest a livelihood from the soil. The insecurity of the great plains east and north-east of Lebanon has driven the people into these mountain fastnesses; and in the civil wars of Lebanon, when the Druses south of the Damascus road have everywhere defeated the Maronites, this region has been regarded as impregnable. The Maronites are a fine race, and if once freed from the ecclesiastical tyranny of the bishops and monks and given possession of the immense monastic estates for the purposes of education, they would become a power in the East. As it is, they are forcing their way upward and reaching positions of influence throughout Syria and Egypt.

From Ajeltûn (see page 25) we descend gradually over a rocky road towards the sea, having on our left the deep chasm of the Nahr el Kelb (see page 21), and in front to the west a fine view of the promontory of Beirût (see page 28), some twenty miles distant. About three miles and a half from the mouth of the Dog River, on the north side of the gorge there are three grottoes, from two of which water issues, and from these comes the chief supply of water in the summer, when the fountains of 'Asal and Lebban are diverted for irrigating purposes. The late Dr. Thomson, the author of "The Land and the Book," first noticed these caves, but the first full exploration of them was made in September, 1873, by W. T. Maxwell, C.E., aided by H. G. Huxley, C.E., Dr. Bliss, President of the S. P. College in Beirût, and Dr. Brigstocke, M.R.C.S., of Beirût. Provided with a raft of inflated goat-skins and a small boat, with a good supply of lights and magnesium wire, they brought their boat and raft into the entrance, down the rugged descent to the main grotto, and launched forth on the still, clear waters of the subterranean lake. After sailing six hundred feet, they reached a rock barrier fifteen feet in height, which compelled them to leave the raft. They then climbed over the rock screen and along a lofty ledge for seven hundred feet, when, lighting a magnesium wire, a scene of great magnificence burst upon their vision. As one of the party says, "From the lofty vaulted roof and precipitous sides hung massive stalactites, between which the rocks were studded with others of a more slender and graceful make, while from below shot up in wild profusion stalagmites which towered aloft, in some cases almost reaching their pendant companions."

From these caves we pass down the river gorge by the stone aqueduct and the weir of

the London Waterworks Company, then by the ancient Roman aqueduct on the north bank, where a wonderful discovery has just been made by Mr. J. Loyted, a Danish architect in Beirût, in company with Dr. Hartmann, Chancellor of the German Consulate. On a line with the ruined abutment of the old Roman bridge they found a series of Babylonian cuneiform inscriptions, engraved on a rock eight mètres and forty centimètres long and twelve mètres in height. The modern aqueduct (see page 37) passes above it. These inscriptions have not yet been fully translated, but it has already been ascertained that one of them relates to the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and his name occurs more than once upon the tablet. From this point we cross the ancient bridge (see page 36) and observe an almost obliterated Arabic inscription at the base of a rock on the south bank, supposed to have been the work of Sultan Selim in 1517. Farther on towards the sea, on the left of the paved road, is a Latin inscription (of 173 A.D.) which settles the identity of the Lycus flumen of the ancients with the Dog River, the wolf having given place to the dog. There is another short Latin inscription of Antoninus farther west towards the sea. On the rock-cut road round the promontory south of the Dog River (see page 33) are to be seen the collection of Assyrian and Egyptian tablets for which this pass has long been celebrated. There are nine tablets in all, three Egyptian and six Assyrian. Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen has arranged them as follows :—

	Height. ft. in.	Breadth. ft. in.	Depth. in.	Date, &c.
1. Egyptian, square-headed	7 6	3 8	6	By Rameses II., dedicated to Phtha.
2. Assyrian, square-headed	6 7	4 5	4½	By Assur-ris-ilim (?), B.C. 1140.
3. Assyrian, square-headed	5 1	2 4	5	By Tiglath-pil-esir, B.C. 1140.
4. Assyrian, round-headed	6 1	2 6½	4½	By Assur-Nazir-pal, B.C. 885.
5. Assyrian, round-headed	6 4	2 9½	5	By Shal-men-esar, B.C. 860.
6. Egyptian, square-headed	7 6	3 8	5½	By Rameses II., dedicated to Ra.
7. Assyrian, round-headed	7 3	3 8½	5½	By Sennacherib, B.C. 702.
8. Egyptian, square-headed	7 4	3 8	5½	By Rameses II., dedicated to the Theban Ammon.
9. Assyrian, round-headed	6	3 1	6	By Esar-haddon, B.C. 681—671.

At the top of the pass on the modern road is a pedestal, and near by it a fragment of a Roman milestone. Here, according to tradition, once stood the statue of a dog, which gave its name, Nahr el Kelb, to the river. Among the striking features of the pass are the old road beds cut in the solid limestone rock by successive monarchs of antiquity. The foot-holes of the horses and the grooves worn by the chariot wheels of armies are still distinctly traceable in the rock. Here passed Pul, Tiglath Pileser, Sesostriis, Shalmaneser, Sargon, and Sennacherib; here swarmed the hosts of Alexander the Great *en route* for Egypt; here passed the Romans, the later Greeks, the Arabs, the Turks, and the Crusaders; and here pass constantly the traders and travellers of the East.

South of the Adonis river, riding down the coast, we cross a lofty paved bridge, pass numerous khans and rock tombs on the right of the road, and then come down to the low cliffs which skirt the northern shore of the Bay of Jûneh. Following an old Roman road hewn in the face of the precipice above the water, we come down on the sandy beach to the river Ma'amiltein. This little torrent is spanned by a round-arched Roman bridge in fair state of preservation (see page 24). It is called Ma'amiltein, or "Two Districts," as it divided

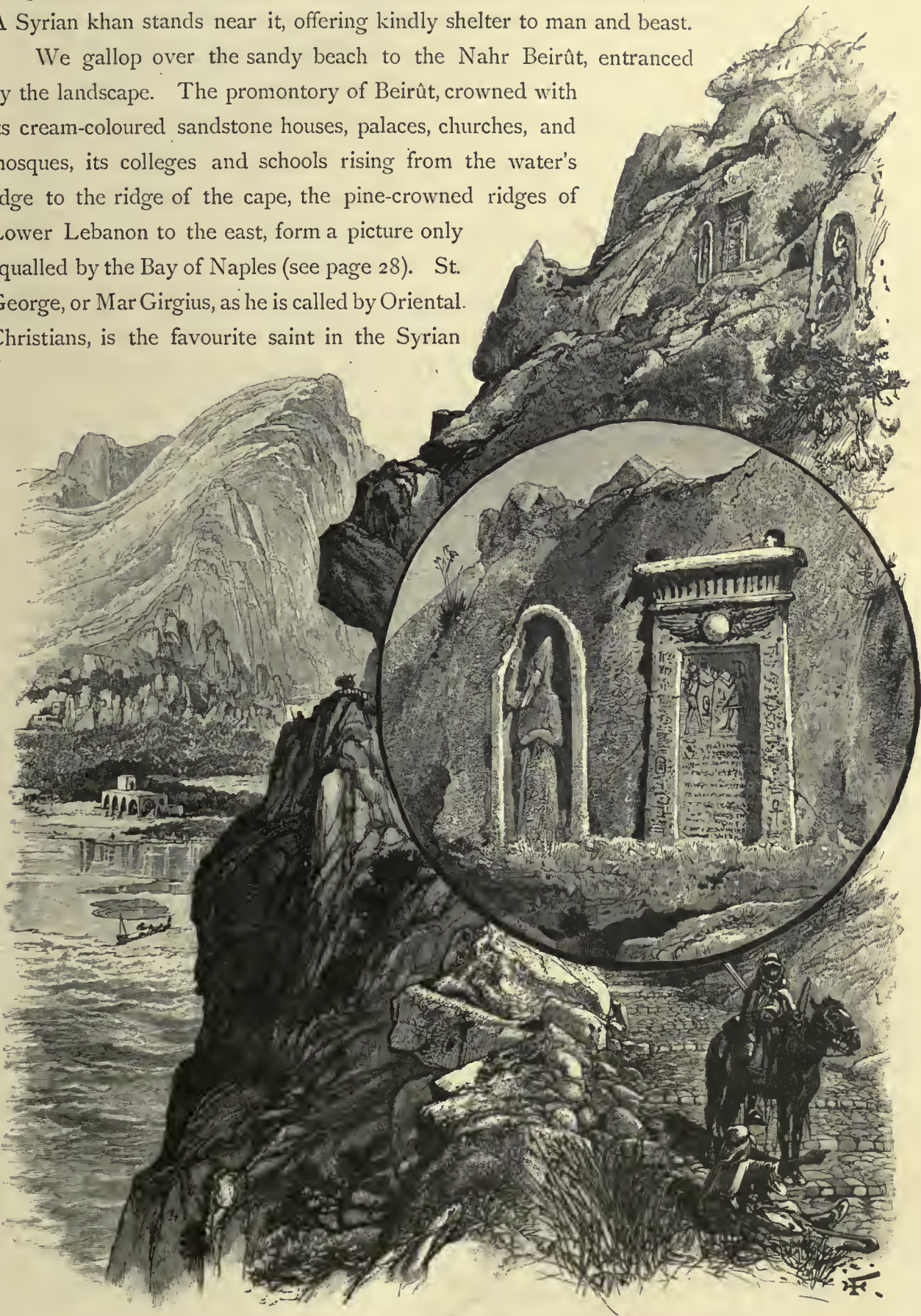


THE SLOPES OF LEBANON.

With a characteristic Maronite village in the foreground, the principal feature of which is its strongly fortified monastery.

the pashaliks of Tripoli and Sidon (see pages 9 and 45) in ancient times. A Syrian khan stands near it, offering kindly shelter to man and beast.

We gallop over the sandy beach to the Nahr Beirût, entranced by the landscape. The promontory of Beirût, crowned with its cream-coloured sandstone houses, palaces, churches, and mosques, its colleges and schools rising from the water's edge to the ridge of the cape, the pine-crowned ridges of Lower Lebanon to the east, form a picture only equalled by the Bay of Naples (see page 28). St. George, or Mar Girgius, as he is called by Oriental Christians, is the favourite saint in the Syrian



CLIFFS AND SCULPTURED TABLETS.

On the rocky promontory which projects far into the sea, south of the Nahr el Kelb (the Dog River), rising to the height of about one hundred feet.

calendar. The Moslems call him El Khidr. Near the bridge of seven arches over the Nahr Beirût is a Muslim mosque or mazar, said to be his place of burial, and farther on towards the city is a ruined tower on the north side of the road, claimed to be the place where St. George killed the Dragon and washed his hands of the bloody stains.

We now enter Beirût, the metropolis of modern Phœnicia, and its most beautiful and most enlightened city. Its situation is all that could be desired, on the northern slope of a promontory which runs west for three miles from the Nahr Beirût to Râs Beirût (see page 28). Here where the changes of temperature through the successive months of the year are so gradual that autumn fades imperceptibly into winter, and winter itself is a genial spring, and spring warms into summer with hardly a change of half a degree a day, you have the perfection of climate, and do not wonder that the Greek poet should call it "the nurse of tranquil life."

Beirût is the Berytus of the ancients, and was probably founded by the Phœnicians. It is the common opinion that its name is derived from its wells, Beer-oth, but M. Renan labours, in his "Mission de Phénicie," to prove that the name was taken from its Pineto or Pine Groves, "called in the Chaldee בְּרוֹת, Beeroth, and rendered in the Arabic Bible *snobar*, or pine-trees." But in this view M. Renan stands alone. In the verse Cant. i. 17, to which he refers, the Chaldee word is rendered, in Dr. V. Dyck's Arabic translation of the Bible, *seru*, or cypress. Robinson gives both cypress and pine as the meaning of "Beroth." Beirût has been celebrated both for its wells and its pines, and the pine grove of Beirût is certainly a more striking feature than its brackish wells could have been in former times, but the weight of traditional authority is in favour of the wells. Strabo first mentions the city in 140 B.C., when it was destroyed by Tryphon during the reign of Demetrius Nicator. The Romans rebuilt it and colonised it with veterans of the fifth Macedonian and eighth Augustan legions. It was here that the two sons of Herod the Great were tried unheard and in their absence, and condemned to death by their cruel and unnatural father. The Elder Agrippa greatly favoured the city, and adorned it with a splendid theatre and amphitheatre, besides baths and porticoes, inaugurating them with games and spectacles of every kind, including shows of gladiators. Here, too, after the destruction of Jerusalem, Titus celebrated the birthday of his father, Vespasian, by similar exhibitions in which many of the captive Jews perished.

In the middle of the third century a celebrated Roman law school was founded here. Students flocked to it from all countries, including Gregory Thaumaturgus and Apion, the martyr. Apollinaris taught grammar here in the fourth century. After the death of Julian the Apostate the Emperor Jovian compelled one Magnus, who had demolished the Church of Berytus, to rebuild it at his own cost. From 250 A.D. to 550 was the golden age of literature in Beirût, which reached its zenith in the reign of Justinian, who regarded the Beirût school with special favour. On the 9th of July, 551, this city was destroyed by an earthquake, and its learned men went for a season to Sidon. In the seventh century Khaled, "the Sword of Mohammed," swept over the land. Beirût fell into Muslim hands, and its decline was rapid and complete.



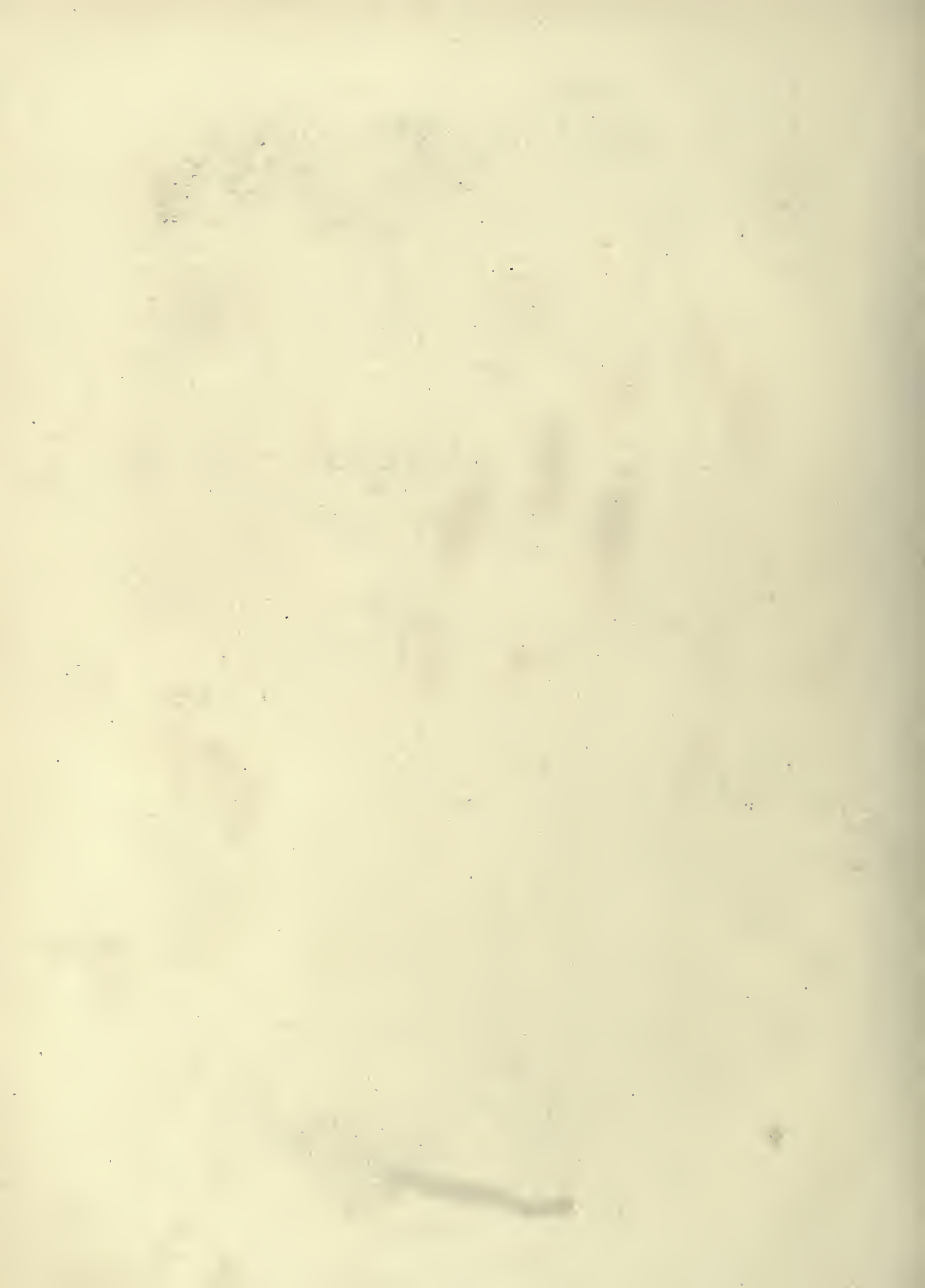


J. D. WOODWARD, PINXIT

C. COUSEN, SCULPT

BAY OF BEIRÛT.

LONDON J. S. VIRTUE & CO. LIMITED.

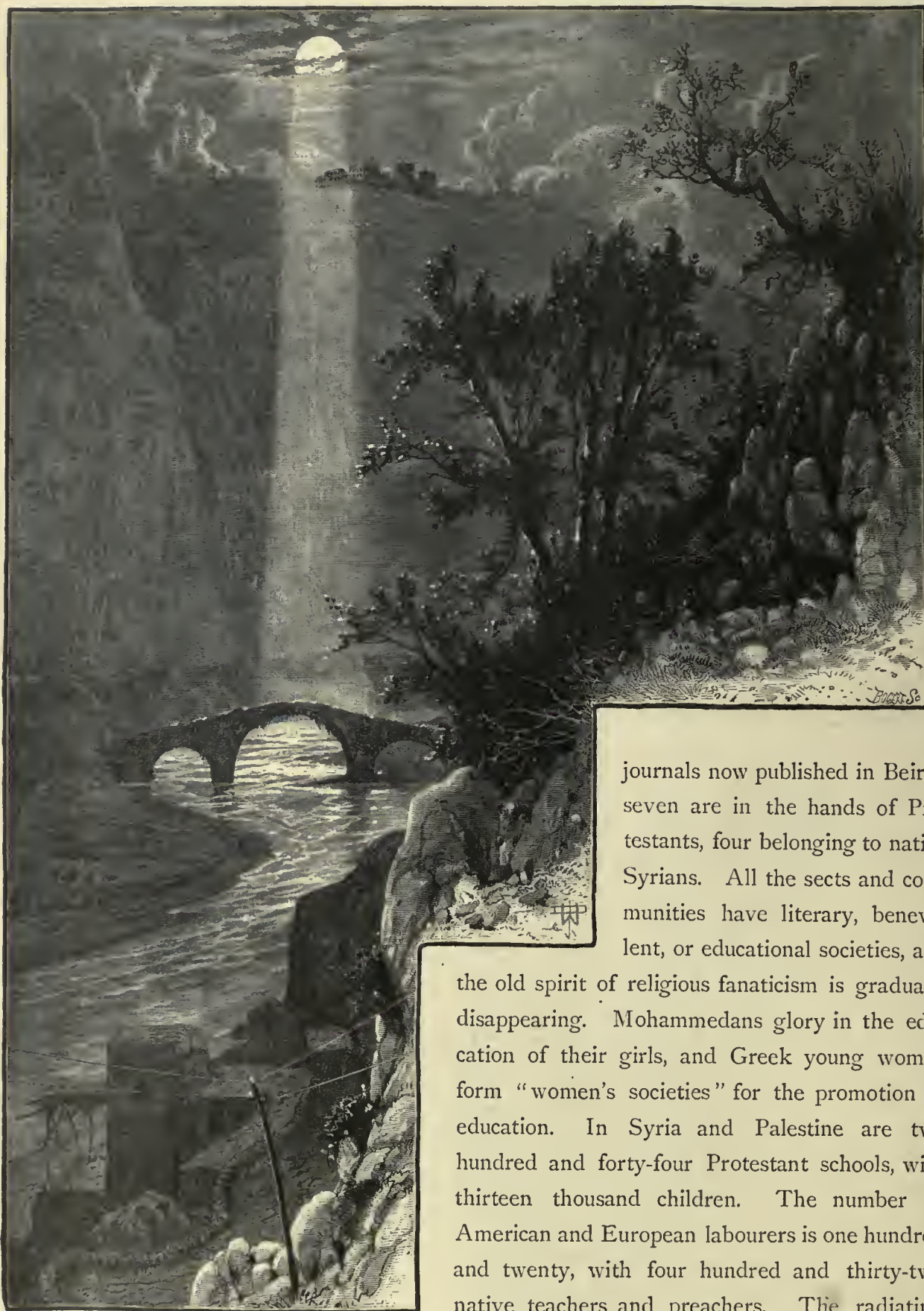


In 1110 Baldwin I., with the Crusading army, captured Beirût, and they long held it as a religious and military centre, the Maronites of Lebanon acting as a friendly barrier to the Muslim hordes of the east. Saladin occupied it for a short period, but the Christians were not permanently displaced until after the battle of Hattin, in 1187. From that time until the days of the famous Druse prince, Fakhr ed Din, it continued in obscurity. This energetic man rebuilt the city and planted new pine groves. In 1840 the English fleet bombarded the city to expel the Egyptian army of Ibrahim Pasha. In August, 1860, it was occupied by six thousand French troops, sent by Napoleon III., with the consent of the European powers, to check the tide of massacre and civil war which had overwhelmed the land.

The antiquities of Beirût are few. Columns of granite and porphyry are scattered everywhere, and built into the old castles at the entrance of the harbour (see page 41). Stone, earthen, and leaden sarcophagi are constantly dug up in excavating for the foundation of houses : three massive granite columns are still standing near the Russian church ; old Roman mosaic floors are often uncovered ; a Greek inscription is still legible over the Bâb ed Dirkeh ; and a picturesque Roman aqueduct crosses the Nahr Beirût a few minutes' ride above the stately bridge just built by H.E. Rustem Pasha. Smaller relics, such as lachrymatories, jewellery, and various articles of bronze and glass, are often discovered.

The ancient coins of Beirût are adorned with various temples and porticoes, and it was once noted for its castles, of which four were standing a few years since. The most lofty and imposing, Burj el Kesshaf, stood outside the south-east corner of the old city, but was recently sold to a native merchant, who razed it to the ground for the stone. The military hospital covers the site of the old round tower, and the two remaining ones guard the entrance to the harbour. These castles were evidently built by the Crusaders from the ruins of ancient Beirût, as the foundations are laid up with granite columns from the old Roman porticoes and temples. But it is modern Beirût which is chiefly interesting to the traveller in our day. This favourite city of Justinian has become again the literary centre and pride of Syria. Here are gathered its colleges and seminaries, and its chief hospitals and churches, journals and printing presses.

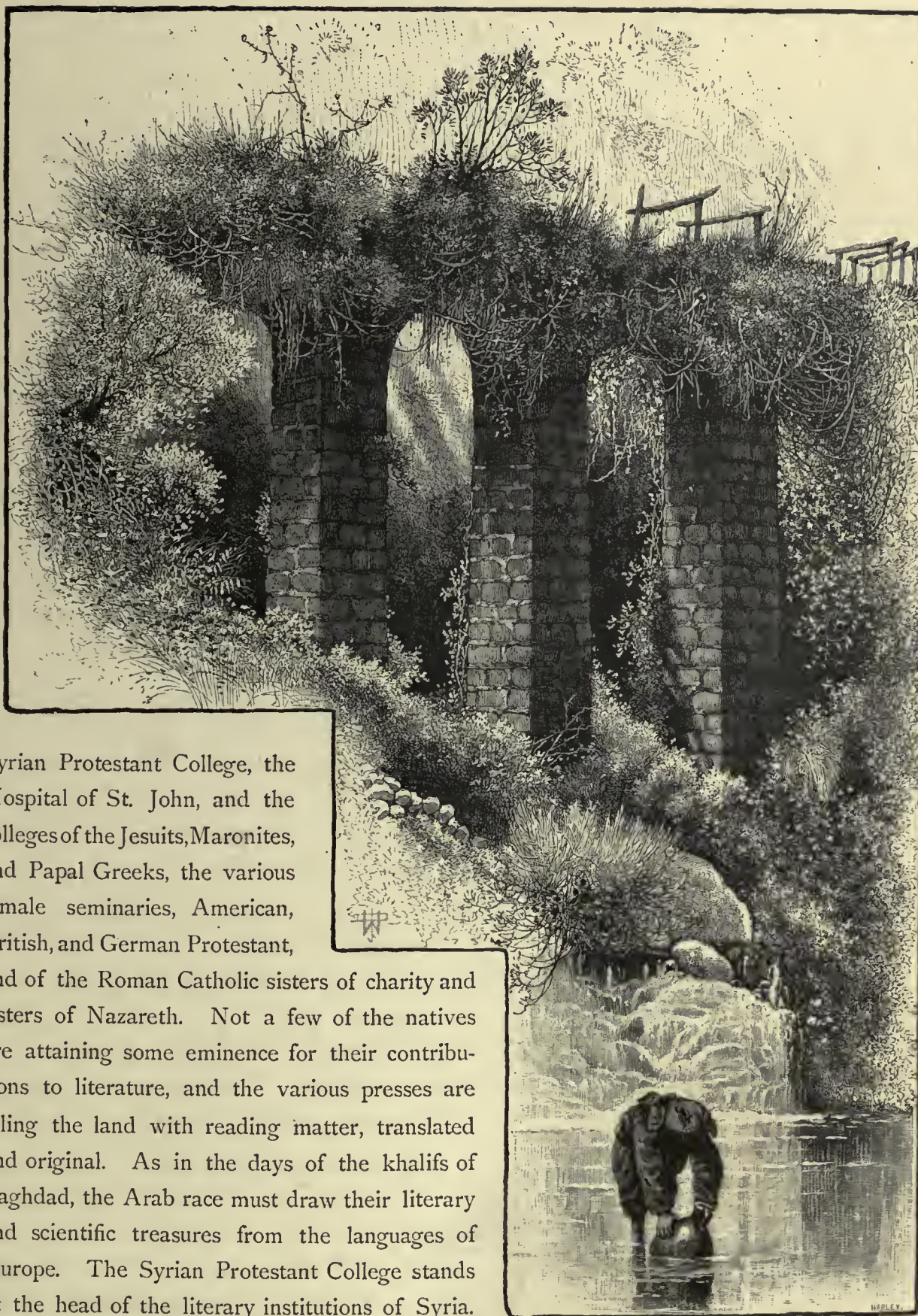
The American Mission, founded in 1820, preceded all other agencies in the work of education. Thousands of youths have been taught, and there are now under its care one hundred and four schools, with more than four thousand pupils, a college and medical institution, three female seminaries, and eight high schools. It has seen Beirût rise from a town of eight thousand to a city of eighty thousand. The cactus-bordered lanes have become macadamised streets of well-built houses, furnished with native-made furniture vieing with that of Europe. The native sects most hostile to education are falling under the influence of educated young men and women, and Mohammedans, Greeks, Maronites, Papal Greeks, and Jews have established schools of their own. Other foreign societies, as the British Syrian Schools, the Prussian Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth, and the Established Church of Scotland, have opened schools for girls and boys, until there are to-day in Beirût three thousand five hundred children in Protestant schools, and seven thousand in the schools of the native societies. Of the twelve



THE NAHR EL KELB (DOG RIVER),
And ancient bridge connected with the rock-cut coast road. In
summer the river is fordable here.

journals now published in Beirût, seven are in the hands of Protestants, four belonging to native Syrians. All the sects and communities have literary, benevolent, or educational societies, and

the old spirit of religious fanaticism is gradually disappearing. Mohammedans glory in the education of their girls, and Greek young women form "women's societies" for the promotion of education. In Syria and Palestine are two hundred and forty-four Protestant schools, with thirteen thousand children. The number of American and European labourers is one hundred and twenty, with four hundred and thirty-two native teachers and preachers. The radiating centre of influence for all these movements is in Beirût. The finest edifices in the city are the



Syrian Protestant College, the Hospital of St. John, and the colleges of the Jesuits, Maronites, and Papal Greeks, the various female seminaries, American, British, and German Protestant, and of the Roman Catholic sisters of charity and sisters of Nazareth. Not a few of the natives are attaining some eminence for their contributions to literature, and the various presses are filling the land with reading matter, translated and original. As in the days of the khalifs of Baghdad, the Arab race must draw their literary and scientific treasures from the languages of Europe. The Syrian Protestant College stands at the head of the literary institutions of Syria. The language of instruction is English, and in its various departments, medical, literary, and

MODERN AQUEDUCT ON THE NAHR EL KELB,
Near to which are the newly discovered Assyrian tablets relating
to Nebuchadnezzar.

scientific, it is fitting young men for the highest spheres of usefulness in the future. The vernacular Arabic, together with the French, Turkish, and Latin languages, are also taught. The astronomical and meteorological observatory is in daily telegraphic communication with Constantinople, London, and Washington. The American, British, and German Protestant seminaries for girls are training hundreds of the choicest daughters of Syria. The Jesuits have established a college and printing house on a scale of great magnificence, and the Maronite, Papal Greek, Orthodox Greek, Mohammedan, and Jewish academies are educating a vast body of youth, while the Sœurs de Charité and the Dames de Nazareth have under training about seven hundred and thirty Arab girls. The massacres of 1860 drove thousands of Christians from the interior into Beirût, many of whom have made this city their permanent home. Its fine climate, pure water, educational advantages, commercial importance, and security from the perils of civil war and massacre have made it the favourite refuge for all sects and classes. Beirût is connected with Damascus by a fine French macadamised road, with diligences running through twice a day (see pages 142 and 143, vol. ii.).

The Mutserriif and all executive and judicial officers are appointed by the Sultan, but the municipality are elected by the people. The Christians of all sects outnumber the Mohammedans two to one. There is an increasing Jewish population and a small European element. Beirût has been noted for its silk culture and manufacture for many centuries, and its modern jewellers and weavers excel in silver and gold filigree work and in the exquisite fabrics of silk, woollen, and cotton, now so greatly in vogue in civilised countries for curtains, cushions, and divans. The silk and gold cloth curtains woven at Zûk, near the Dog River, are sought for to adorn the palaces of Europe. The future commercial importance of Beirût will depend on the terminus of the great trunk railway from the Mediterranean to India. But its literary importance and its eligibility as a home for the most enlightened of Syria's sons in the future can never be materially changed. Its people, largely descended from the vigorous races of Lebanon, are enterprising and capable of high cultivation. The city is growing year by year in beauty and in influence in the East, and its institutions bid fair to be far more potent for good than its famous university in the golden age of Justinian.

About one mile south-west of the College, the cape of Râs Beirût terminates in an abrupt cliff at the Rausheh, the old Syriac name for râs, or headland. The cliff is worn away in a curve, at the base of which is a deep grotto or cavern only to be approached by rowing boats. Opposite the mouth of the cavern, and in the focus of the semicircle formed by the cliff, rise the two picturesque Pigeon Islands, under one of which is a natural tunnel. Not only pigeons, but vast shoals of seals formerly added interest to the spot. The cretaceous rock presents a curious appearance with its alternate strata of white chalk and black flint, and the distortions and curvatures of the strata are beautifully marked in the islands. On a recent visit during a westerly gale the scene was one of indescribable grandeur. The mighty waves came rolling in from the deep sea, and, striking upon the ledges outside the islands, burst into milky foam

and swept around and behind the islands with deafening roar, dashing far up the cliffs and falling back into the boiling abyss of waters (see page 40).

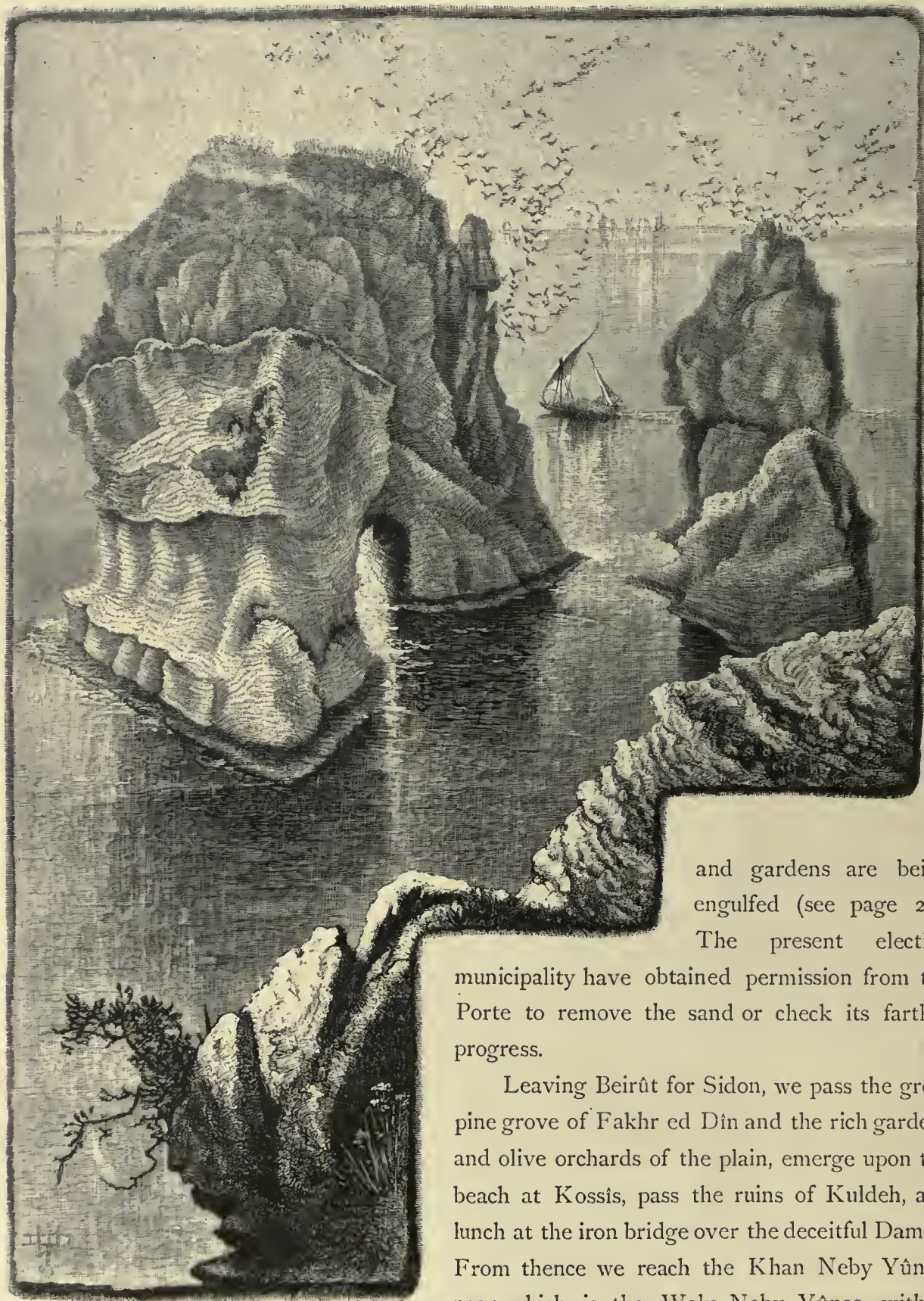
South of the city, and for four miles along the beach, is the drifting sandbank called "Ramel Beirût," which for ages has been creeping slowly northward and eastward, threatening



BATH AND CAFÉ, BEIRÛT.

Of late years a great impetus has been given to fishing on this coast. During the summer nights fishermen may often be seen out on the rocks and reefs with torches and cressets, by which certain kinds of fish are attracted.

the destruction of the city. Within twenty-five years, to my own knowledge, it has advanced in some places not less than one hundred feet. The prevailing west winds drive it up from the seashore on the south-west, and during the rainless summer months it drifts like new-fallen snow towards the city. Numerous houses have been removed to make way for it, and orchards



PIGEON ROCKS, BEIRÛT.

In the cliff, from which these island rocks have broken away, there is an enormous cavern which can be entered by small boats.

and gardens are being engulfed (see page 28).

The present elective municipality have obtained permission from the Porte to remove the sand or check its farther progress.

Leaving Beirût for Sidon, we pass the great pine grove of Fakhr ed Dîn and the rich gardens and olive orchards of the plain, emerge upon the beach at Kossis, pass the ruins of Kuldeh, and lunch at the iron bridge over the deceitful Damûr. From thence we reach the Khan Neby Yûnas, near which is the Wely Neby Yûnas, with a white dome, marking the place where, according to Muslim tradition, the prophet Jonah was

thrown up by the fish (see page 44). The part of Lebanon between Beirût and Sidon is

known as Druse Lebanon, from the Druses, that extraordinary people who inhabit it. Their religion is a secret politico-religious code, El Hakim is their incarnate god, and while they may, when convenient, profess any or all other religions, they still continue Druses at heart. Courteous, brave, united, and industrious, they are the puzzle, the unsolved problem of



BEIRÛT CASTLE.

Built by the Crusaders, but partly with materials which had been used in earlier structures, for there are many granite columns introduced transversely into the lower part of the walls.

Syrian society. They speak pure Arabic, and are English in their political bias. Leaving Neby Yûnas, we ride over the successive sand beaches and rocky nukkars for three hours, until we reach the river Auwaly, where we have the ancient city of Sidon in full view (see pages 45 and 47).

SAIDA, OR SIDON.

"Sidonii que lares . . . Sidonaque pulchram."
 "The gods of Sidon . . . Sidon the beautiful."

These two lines from two of the later Latin poets sum up the two striking features in the history of Sidon, the antiquity of its religious cult, and the beauty of its scenery. Sidon was the Divine City, which gave gods to the Phœnicians, and through them to Greece, Italy, and Carthage. It was the Jerusalem of Baal worship. Here was worshipped that divine couple of the Phœnician religion, Baal Sidon and Ashtaroath, the same which at Gebal (Jebeil) was called Thammuz and Baalath, at Carthage Baal Hamon and Tanith, among the Hittites Shed and Shedath, and in Damascus Hadad and Atargath. Here was the home of—

"Astareth, whom the Phœnicians called
 Astarte, queen of Heaven with crescent horns :
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon,
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs."

The hardy navigators of Sidon and Tyre, in pushing their adventurous prow into the Euxine, the Ægean, and beyond the Pillars of Hercules, carried with them their religion and their peculiar divinities. Their Ashtaroath became Aphrodite in Greece, and the temple of Thasos in the Ægean was dedicated to Melkarth, the Tyrian Hercules. In the island of Malta a dedicatory inscription speaks of "the lord Melkarth, Baal of Tyre."

Old Sidon, named by the grandson of Noah, and styled Great Zidon by Joshua, is, perhaps, the oldest living city in the world, and claims the honour of being mentioned both in the book of Genesis and in the Homeric poems. Homer speaks of Sidon as rich in ore ; but its ores were not native, excepting the iron, brought down from Southern Lebanon. Its tin was brought from Britain (Ber-et-tanic), Spain, and the Caucasus, its steel from Colchis, its gold and copper from the Red Sea and Cyprus, and the Sidonian and Tyrian artificers became famous for their bronzes and other works in metallurgy.

The Sidonians were already a commercial nation when the Egyptians expelled the shepherd kings, and from the first half of the seventeenth till the end of the thirteenth century B.C., the Sidonians were subject to the Egyptians.

A papyrus in the British Museum contains the account of an imaginary journey made by an Egyptian officer into Syria, at the end of the reign of Rameses II., which indicates that Beirût, Sidon, and Tyre at that time were peaceful tributaries of Egypt.

The Sidonians supplied the mercantile and military navy of Egypt, and during this period, when no rival navy existed, Sidonian trade and commercial prosperity reached their highest point. Beyond the Nile valley, the sailors of Sidon and Beirût coasted along the shores of Africa and founded Cambe, afterwards Carthage, and Hippo. The Egyptians had a superstitious horror of the sea, regarding it as impure, and as the domain of Set, the god of evil, the adversary of Osiris. An Egyptian navy was therefore out of the question. Sidonian officers and seamen manned the Egyptian fleets in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and

1870
The first of the year
was a very dry one
and the crops were
very poor.

The second of the year
was a very wet one
and the crops were
very good.

The third of the year
was a very dry one
and the crops were
very poor.

The fourth of the year
was a very wet one
and the crops were
very good.

The fifth of the year
was a very dry one
and the crops were
very poor.

The sixth of the year
was a very wet one
and the crops were
very good.

The seventh of the year
was a very dry one
and the crops were
very poor.

The eighth of the year
was a very wet one
and the crops were
very good.

The ninth of the year
was a very dry one
and the crops were
very poor.

The tenth of the year
was a very wet one
and the crops were
very good.

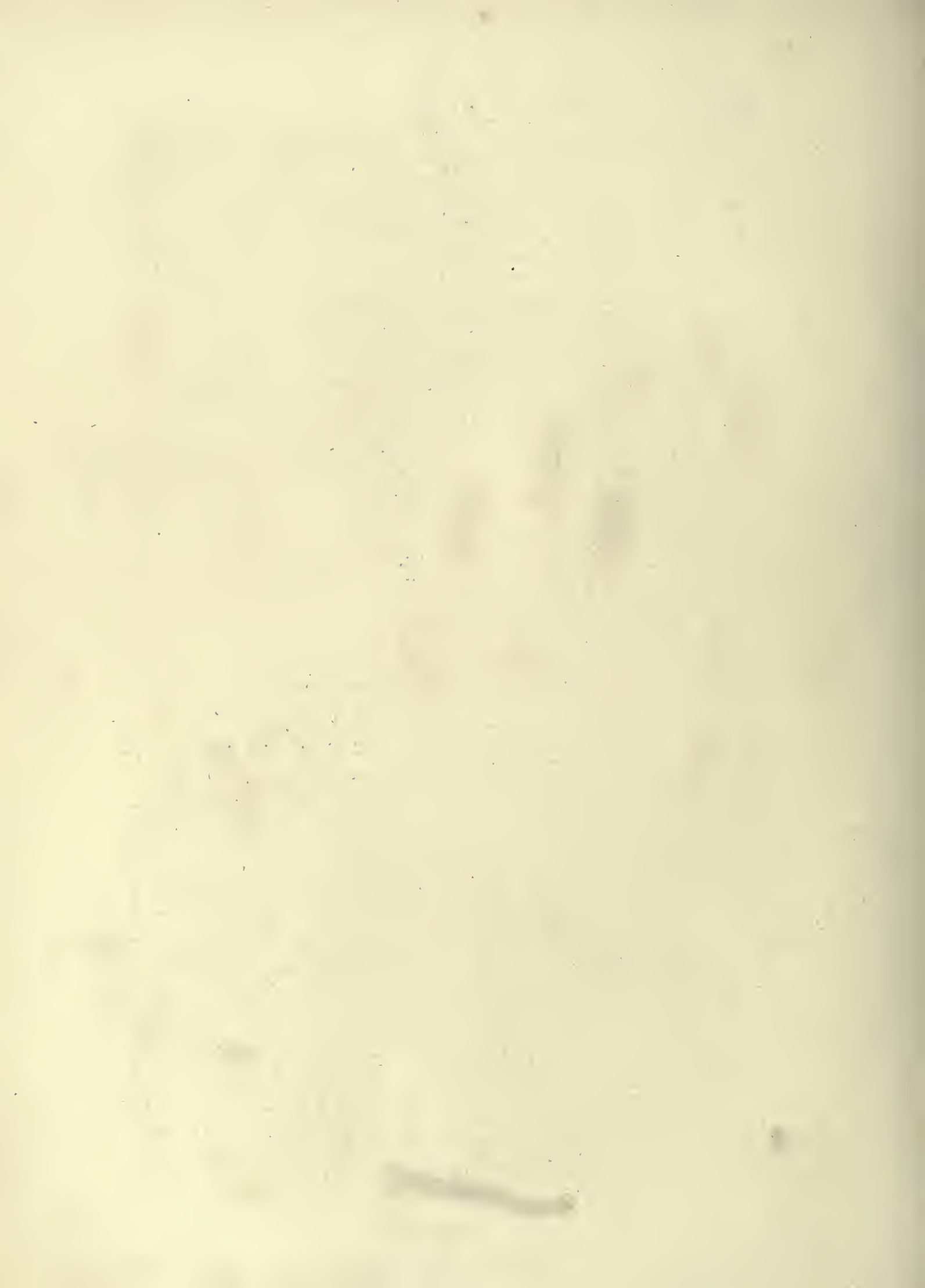
The eleventh of the year
was a very dry one
and the crops were
very poor.



J. D. WOODWARD. PINXIT

A. WILLMORE. SCULPT.

SIDON.



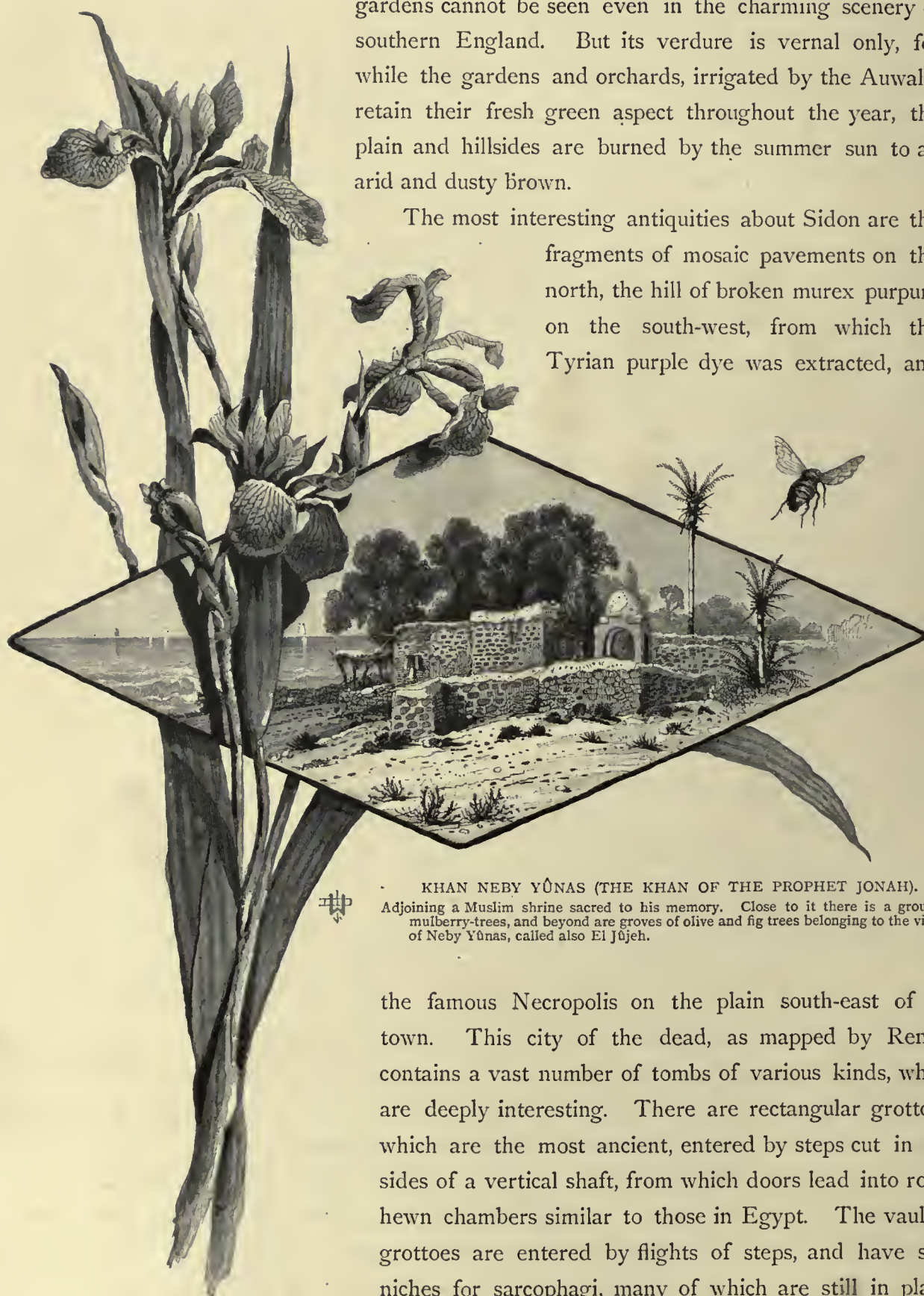
the commerce of Solomon between Ophir and his ports of Elath and Ezion Geber was carried on by Tyrian sailors, the descendants of the old Sidonian navigators. But, alas! Great Sidon is now only little Saida, "the place of fishing." Its seamen are mere coasting sailors running their little feluccas and shakhtûrs along the Syrian shores, while its contracted harbour can hardly shelter its tiny craft (see page 45).

The ancient city, so often built, destroyed, and re-built, is now a town of nine thousand inhabitants, and in its want of business life and enterprise, a typical oriental city. The Israelites never conquered it, but the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Persians subdued it, and it opened its gates to the two-horned Alexander in 332 B.C. Under the Romans it was a wealthy city, and it continued such during the New Testament times, when our Lord visited the borders of Tyre and Sidon. St. Paul found Christian friends here on his voyage to Rome. Its Bishop Theodorus was present at the Council of Nice, 325 A.D. During the Crusades, Sidon was alternately in the hands of the Franks and the Muslims, and suffered terribly from capture and re-capture by the hostile armies. The town is situated on the north-western slope of a low promontory extending down to the sea. In front of the sea wall a chain of island rocks runs from north to south, formerly enclosing a harbour large enough to hold fifty galleys; but the Druse prince, Fakhr ed Din, filled it up with stones and earth to prevent the entrance of Turkish ships, and now only the little shakhtûrs of Kozta Jiz and his fellow sailors can find anchorage in the shallow waters. Sidon is a walled town, and, unlike Beirût, which has overleaped its walls and spread for miles around, it keeps closely pent up within its narrow limits. A more compact city could hardly be imagined, for not only are the streets too narrow to allow loaded camels to pass each other with facility, but the houses are to a great extent built on arches over the streets, so that one can ride or walk from one end of the town to the other under dark, gloomy tunnels. Within the town are six great khans, called by the people wakkaleh, or agencies. They are quadrangular, built around a large paved courtyard, two stories high, with numerous rooms for travellers and storehouses for merchandise. But Beirût has destroyed the commerce of Sidon, and the caravans, bringing the wheat and butter of the Haurân to Beirût and carrying back the wares of Europe, pass by Sidon, outside the walls. About seven hundred of the people are Muslims, five hundred Jews, and the rest Catholics, Maronites, and Protestants. There is a female seminary under the care of the American Mission, with forty-five boarders and ninety day scholars, and a boys' high school. The French Sœurs de Charité have also a girls' school, the Jesuits a school for boys, and the Muslim Benevolent Society a boys' school.

The fruit gardens and orchards of Sidon, extending half a mile from the walls, are the pride of its people, and abound in oranges, lemons, sweet lemons, figs, apricots, pomegranates, almonds, plums, apples, peaches, pears, citrons, and bananas, which are exported by sea to Beirût and Alexandria, and by land to all the towns of Lebanon and to Damascus. The view of the plain and town from the Neby Yahia, or Tomb of John the Baptist, a mile to the east, in the month of April is extremely beautiful. A more verdant glade than that south of the

gardens cannot be seen even in the charming scenery of southern England. But its verdure is vernal only, for while the gardens and orchards, irrigated by the Auwaly, retain their fresh green aspect throughout the year, the plain and hillsides are burned by the summer sun to an arid and dusty brown.

The most interesting antiquities about Sidon are the fragments of mosaic pavements on the north, the hill of broken murex purpura on the south-west, from which the Tyrian purple dye was extracted, and

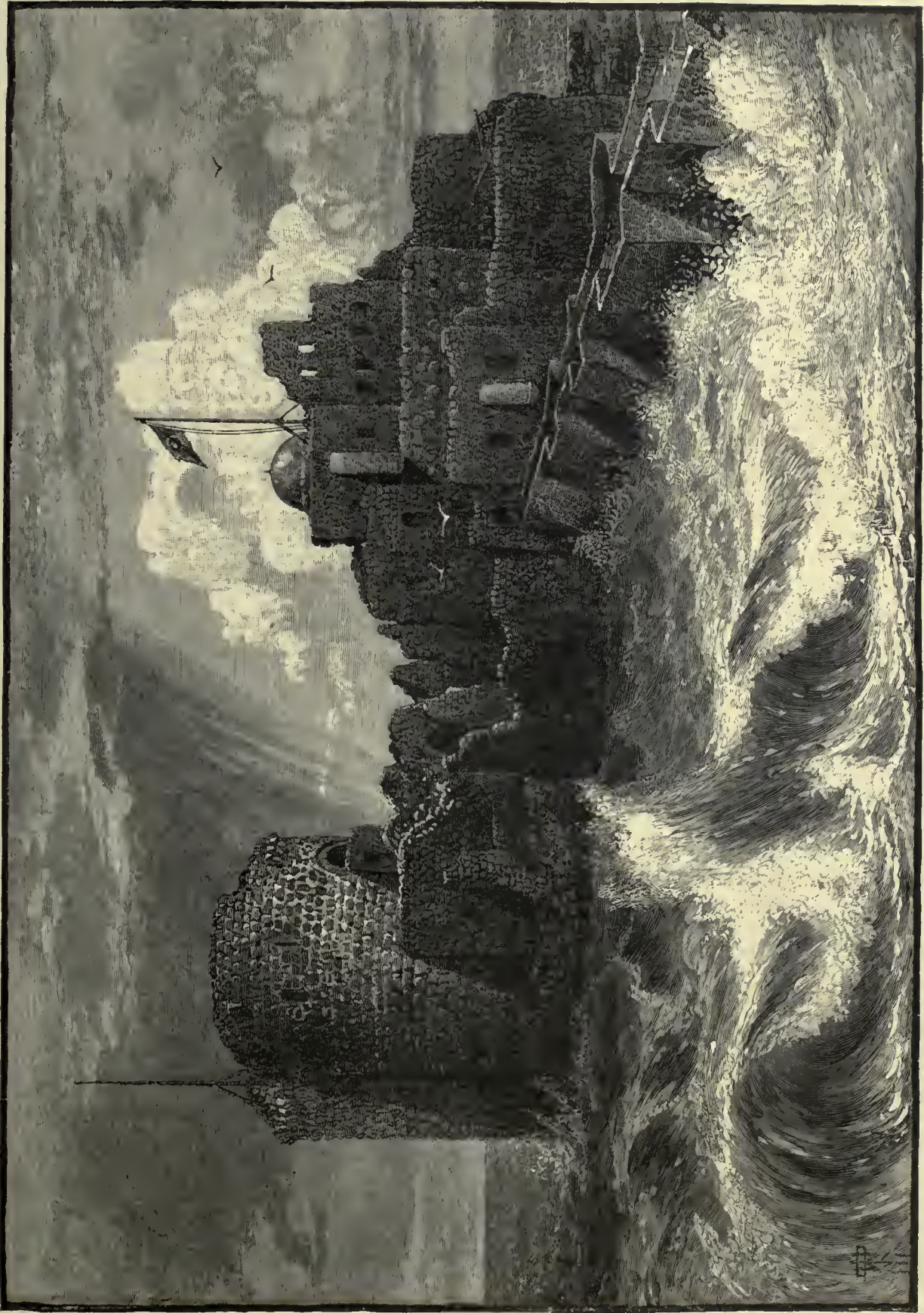


KHAN NEBY YÛNAS (THE KHAN OF THE PROPHET JONAH).

Adjoining a Muslim shrine sacred to his memory. Close to it there is a group of mulberry-trees, and beyond are groves of olive and fig trees belonging to the village of Neby Yûnas, called also El Jbjeħ.

the famous Necropolis on the plain south-east of the town. This city of the dead, as mapped by Renan, contains a vast number of tombs of various kinds, which are deeply interesting. There are rectangular grottoes, which are the most ancient, entered by steps cut in the sides of a vertical shaft, from which doors lead into rock-hewn chambers similar to those in Egypt. The vaulted grottoes are entered by flights of steps, and have side niches for sarcophagi, many of which are still in place.

There are also grottoes lined with lime cement, painted in the Græco-Roman style, some having Greek inscriptions. In the rectangular grottoes are marble sarcophagi of the



THE CASTLE AND HARBOUR OF SAIDA, THE ANCIENT SIDON.
Called Kûl'at el Bahr (Castle on the Sea). It stands on a rocky island opposite the north-east end of the town, with which it is connected by an embankment with arches

Phœnician anthropoïde style, fitted to the shape of the embalmed body. There are also sarcophagi in lead, such as are constantly found in the villages east of the city. Those in the vaulted grottoes are generally of pottery, and those in the decorated tombs are square, profusely decorated with garlands and other sculptured ornaments. About ten minutes south-east of the Acre Gate of Sidon is the Mugharet Ablûn, or Cave of Apollo, where, in 1855, was discovered the beautiful black basalt sarcophagus now in the museum of the Louvre in Paris. The Phœnician inscription of nine hundred and ninety words on its lid is well cut and perfectly preserved. European scholars have made several translations of it, which agree in the essential features.

"In the month Bul, in the 14th of my reign, King Ashmunazar, the king of the Sidonians, son of Tabnith, king of the Sidonians, grandson of King Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians, spake, saying, I am snatched away before my time, like the flowing of a river

"Every royal person, and every man who shall open this funeral couch, or who shall take away the sarcophagus of this funeral couch, he shall have no funeral with the dead, nor be buried in a sepulchre, nor leave behind them son or posterity and the holy gods shall cut off that royal person, nor shall his root be planted downward, nor his fruit spring upward, for I am Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians, son of Tabnith, king of the Sidonians, grandson of Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians, and my mother, Immiastoreth, priestess of Astarte, our sovereign queen, daughter of King Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians

"It is we who have built this temple of the gods—in Sidon by the sea, and the heavenly powers have rendered Astarte favourable. It is we who have erected the temple to Esmuno and the sanctuary of Ene Delil in the mountain the temple of Baal Sidon, and the temple of Astarte, the glory of Baal, lord of kings, who bestowed on us Dor and Joppa and ample corn lands which are at the root of Dan"

This inscription is written in the Phœnician character, and is one of the most important Phœnician inscriptions yet discovered, the next in interest being that of Mesha on the Moabite stone, the Siloam tablet,* and a tariff of sacrifices of Punic origin. The various Phœnician cities possessed rich archives and regular records, preserved with care from the most ancient times, the most valuable of which is the Græco-Phœnician work of Sanchoniathon the Beirût scholar, and dedicated to Abi Baal, king of Beirût. It is the opinion of Professor Sayce, that remains of the old Phœnician libraries must still exist somewhere in the unexcavated ruins of Syria. The gardeners of Sidon are constantly on the watch for new treasures, as they plough the soil or dig foundations for building. The citadel of Sidon, called by the Arabs Kûl'at el Mezzeh, is an ancient tower, said to have been built by Louis IX. in 1253. Near its base two colossal statues were recently exhumed. The Kûl'at el Bahr, or Castle on the Sea, stands on a small island connected with the land by a bridge of nine arches. It was built in the thirteenth century, the large blocks belonging to a more ancient structure. The

* As the "Siloam tablet" had not been discovered when Colonel Wilson wrote his description of the Conduit and Pools of Siloam (see page 102 *et seq.*, vol. i.), a few words respecting it must be added here. The inscription was first observed, in June, 1880, by a pupil of Herr Schick, an architect who has long resided in Jerusalem. He was wading along the rock-cut channel which conveys water from the Fountain of the Virgin to the Upper Pool of Siloam, when he suddenly slipped and fell into the water; as he rose he noticed "some marks which looked like letters" on the rocky wall of the channel, which in this part is not more than two feet wide; its length is one thousand seven hundred and eight feet, but the direct distance from the Fountain to the Pool is only one thousand one hundred and four feet, for the channel deviates considerably from a straight line. The inscription is in a recess at the lower end of the conduit, and about nineteen feet from the place where it opens out into the Upper Pool of Siloam (see page 78, vol. i.). Before the inscription could be copied it was necessary to reduce the level of the water till the stream was not more than six inches in depth; but in this the copyist was obliged to crouch down in a cramped attitude, for the last line was still only just above water. Nevertheless Herr Schick and Professor Sayce each made a copy, and Lieut. Conder afterwards obtained a squeeze of the inscription from which casts were made for distribution, and thus many independent translations (which only slightly vary) have been made. The language is primitive Hebrew, the characters are Phœnician of the sixth to the eighth century B.C. The record implies (according to Professor Sayce and others) that the channel was excavated from both ends, and that the workmen met in the middle. "Behold the excavation! Now this is the history of the tunnel. While the excavators were lifting up the pick, each towards the other, and while there were yet three cubits to be broken through, the voice of one called to his neighbour, for there was a (crookedness?) in the rock on the right. They rose up they struck in the west of the excavation, each to meet the other, pick to pick; and there flowed the waters from their outlet to the Pool for a distance of a thousand cubits, and (three-fourths?) of a cubit was the height of the rock over the head of the excavation here."—[M. E. R.]

island on the west and south-west was once covered by a massive sea-wall, protecting the harbour from the waves, but after the destruction of the harbour by Fakhr ed Din, the



THE CITADEL OF SAIDA, THE ANCIENT SIDON.

Now called the Kūl'at el Mezzeh. It stands on the south-eastern extremity of the town, on a heap of rubbish in which layers of the purple shell still are visible.

huge blocks were removed for building purposes, and in rough weather the sea makes a clean breach over the rocks into the little harbour. The old seats of Phœnician art and commerce have fallen into ruin and decay. Arvad, Gebal, Sidon and Tyre are hardly

known to modern commerce, while Beirût is monopolizing the Syrian trade. The art of extracting the purple dye from the *murex purpura*, millions of whose broken fragments



A PEASANT WOMAN CHURNING.

The churn is made of the tanned skin of a goat stripped off whole; it is partly filled with milk, and the extremities being securely closed, it is suspended in any convenient place by four ropes fastened to the skin of the legs; it is then regularly moved to and fro, with a jerk, until the process is completed.

form a hill at the south-west gate of Sidon, is hopelessly lost. The arts of gold and silver fancy work and the weaving of silk and wool have left Sidon and Tyre for the more thriving markets of Beirût and Damascus.



SITE OF SAREPTA.

As early as the thirteenth century this city was in ruins, and now only fragments of its foundations exist, chiefly on a headland called 'Ain el Kantarah and also along the shore south of it, extending for a mile or more. Early Greek and Roman writers speak highly in praise of the wines of Sarepta.

THE PHŒNICIAN PLAIN.

THE route from Sidon to Tyre is by the seashore, generally pastureless and uninteresting, yet, in its ease and the absence of rugged stone-heaps and slippery rocks, a great contrast to the ordinary road of Palestine. Though the sea is tideless there is generally a broad belt of sand, not too soft or heavy. Behind this runs the narrow Phœnician plain, rich and well watered. Wells and springs are frequent throughout, often affording pure and sweet water within a few feet of the sea itself. Beyond the plain the bare but terraced hills rise abruptly, steep and rocky. Several streams intersect the path, across which have been bridges in Roman and perhaps in later days, but floods and neglect have left only traces of what once was, in a few buttresses and here and there the spring of an arch. In winter it is often difficult to ford or swim the swollen rivers, especially the Nahr ez Zâherâny, or "Flowery River" (so named from the mass of oleanders which fringe it), shortly before reaching the village of Surafend, which represents the Zarephath of the Old Testament, the *Sarepta* of the New (see above). There is little to mark the spot where Elijah sojourned so long with the hospitable widow and blessed her exhaustless cruse, for the ancient site, open and unprotected, close to the shore, has long been deserted, and its inhabitants have made a new settlement more than two miles inland, under the shelter of the hills, to which they have transferred the ancient name, and where they are safe from the raids of Bedawin horsemen. All that is left of old Zarephath are a few heaps of stones, the greater part of the materials having been carried off for modern

buildings to Beirût. There is, however, a little wely called El Khidr, the Arabic name for St. George, who is revered as a Muslim as well as a Christian saint; and the wely is reasonably believed to be the successor of the Christian chapel which the Crusaders built over the traditional site of the house of Elijah's hostess. A double interest attaches to this spot, from the tradition (for which we must confess there is no absolute historical ground, but surely much probability) that Sarepta was also blessed by the presence of a greater than Elijah, and that here our Lord showed mercy on the daughter of the Syrophœnician woman. We know that the village He visited was somewhere in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. The context seems to imply it was beyond Tyre, and this is almost the only village which would meet these requirements. What more natural than that He should visit the place where His great forerunner sojourned so long? The modern inhabitants of Surafend have moved the sacred localities to their new home, and point out in the present village the house of the widow and the spot where our Lord met the Syrophœnician widow. But nothing is more certain than that until after the times of the Crusades the place was close to the shore.

Along the lonely strand skirting the fertile but scarcely cultivated plain we proceed towards Tyre. Strange that such desolation should have overtaken one of the chief cradles of early civilisation! Now lawlessness and barbarism have driven Phœnicia back into the rocky hills, and the weary peasant, with his tools on his shoulder, spends half his time in journeying from security to his field, and in toiling back at sunset to his rocky home.

The route to Tyre continues near the shore. Not a village is to be seen:—here and there ancient tombs and a few piles of stones. Several little streams have to be forded, till at length we reach the banks of the Kâsimiyeh, the ancient Leontes, still known higher up as the Litâny, when we turn inland by the traces of a Roman road towards one of the few bridges which remain unbroken in the country. Here the plain and the valley of the river (see page 53) are well cultivated. There is a khan, not in ruins, for the convenience of travellers, and several villages on either side of the river's course, one just to the south of the bridge. The stream is far too deep and rapid to be forded, and hence the bridge has been of necessity rebuilt (see page 52), a rare, perhaps unique exception to the ordinary system of the country. Hence we might in a short hour ride to the historic capital of Phœnicia. But a day is well spent in an expedition up the tortuous course of the Leontes. For several miles inland the river winds through a rich corn plain of some extent, into which it suddenly emerges from a deep fissure in the long range of the wall of Galilee. The plain is for the most part treeless, though the banks of the stream are richly fringed with oleanders. The country is best understood by riding through the corn-fields on the north bank. Under the foot of the hills is a charming piece of olive ground, with grateful shade, and a village behind it, nestled at the foot of the cliff. It is more than half an hour's very rough scrambling for the horses to reach the crest, when we find ourselves, not on the top of the hill, but on the brow of an upland down studded with villages, and with a noble view seawards, which well repays the climb. The villages are generally three or four miles apart and have names evidently derived from the Hebrew, as Rezich, Zerayiyeh,

Zara, Athshît, Shukin, and the like. But although part of the old tribe of Asher, the survey of the Palestine Exploration has halted at the bank of the Leontes, and no research has as yet been devoted to their identification, beyond the very few names mentioned in the Book of Joshua. Each of these villages is surrounded by a grove of fig-trees, bare enough in winter, but without which in summer these uplands would be dreary indeed. In the centre of many of them is a mound or heap composed of the débris of the old Phœnician fort.

Though as we ride along we are very near the Leontes, the river gives no sign of its neighbourhood. It is never mentioned in Scripture, yet is the largest river in the country after the Jordan, and has some peculiar features. Rising near Ba'albec, far away north in the Bŭka'a, or Cœlo-Syria, it has its farthest source, like the Jordan and the Orontes, in the plain which commences the separation between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon (see small map, page 12). We may stand on a slope of Lebanon and see the origin



THE BAY OF SIDON FROM SAREPTA.

The distance from Sarepta to Sidon, in a straight line across the bay, is about ten miles. On the extreme right, partly concealed by a tree, the ruins on Tell el Burâk can be distinguished, and the Khan el Burâk close by. In the distance the snow-covered summits of Lebanon appear.

of the watersheds of the three rivers from the same spot, and it is difficult to realise, as we gaze,

how utterly different is the subsequent career of each. For many miles the tiny streamlets of Litâny and Jordan flow southwards in almost parallel lines, while the Orontes takes a due northward course. The almost imperceptible rise which separates them gradually swells into a ridge, forming a watershed between Lebanon and Hermon, till the Litâny makes a rift through Northern Galilee, a stupendous gorge, which affords the grandest scenery in the country, as by the natural bridge of El Kûweh (see page 134, vol. ii.). Dashing through a glen some thousand feet deep in places, just below the great castle of Shukif it meets a mountain barrier, a spur



BRIDGE OVER THE NAHR EL KÂSIMÎYEH (THE LEONTES).

On the ancient Roman coast-road, which is now traversed by telegraph wires; higher up, this river is called El Litâny.

of Lebanon running east and west. Exit seems impossible. The river rushes straight against the mighty wall and turns at right angles to the west, working its way by a fissure wholly invisible till the traveller is close upon its edge, and which splits the apparently continuous range to its very centre. The tableland to the north of the river continues without any prominent hills or deep valleys from the ridge above the mouth of the Kâsimîyeh (called in its upper course the Litâny, doubtless its old Phœnician name, corrupted by the Greeks into Leontes), as far as Shukif and the range which forms the watershed of the Jordan.

Returning again to the Phœnician plain, the path lies for six miles along the shore on hard, smooth sand. The sweep of the land makes a fine embayed coast line, with the headland by Sarepta forming one end of the bow, and the moles, buildings, and ruins of Tyre, in front,

forming the other (see page 57). Tyre, no longer an island but a peninsula, stands out boldly into the sea, and the first view is very imposing, whether we approach it from the north or the south. A bare strip of sand intervenes between the port and the plain behind, which of late years is rapidly becoming a bright oasis of mulberry and orange groves and



THE VALLEY OF THE LEONTES, NEAR THE COAST.

The river, the Nahr el Kâsimiyeh, is of considerable depth at this point, and flows hence to the sea in a very serpentine course.

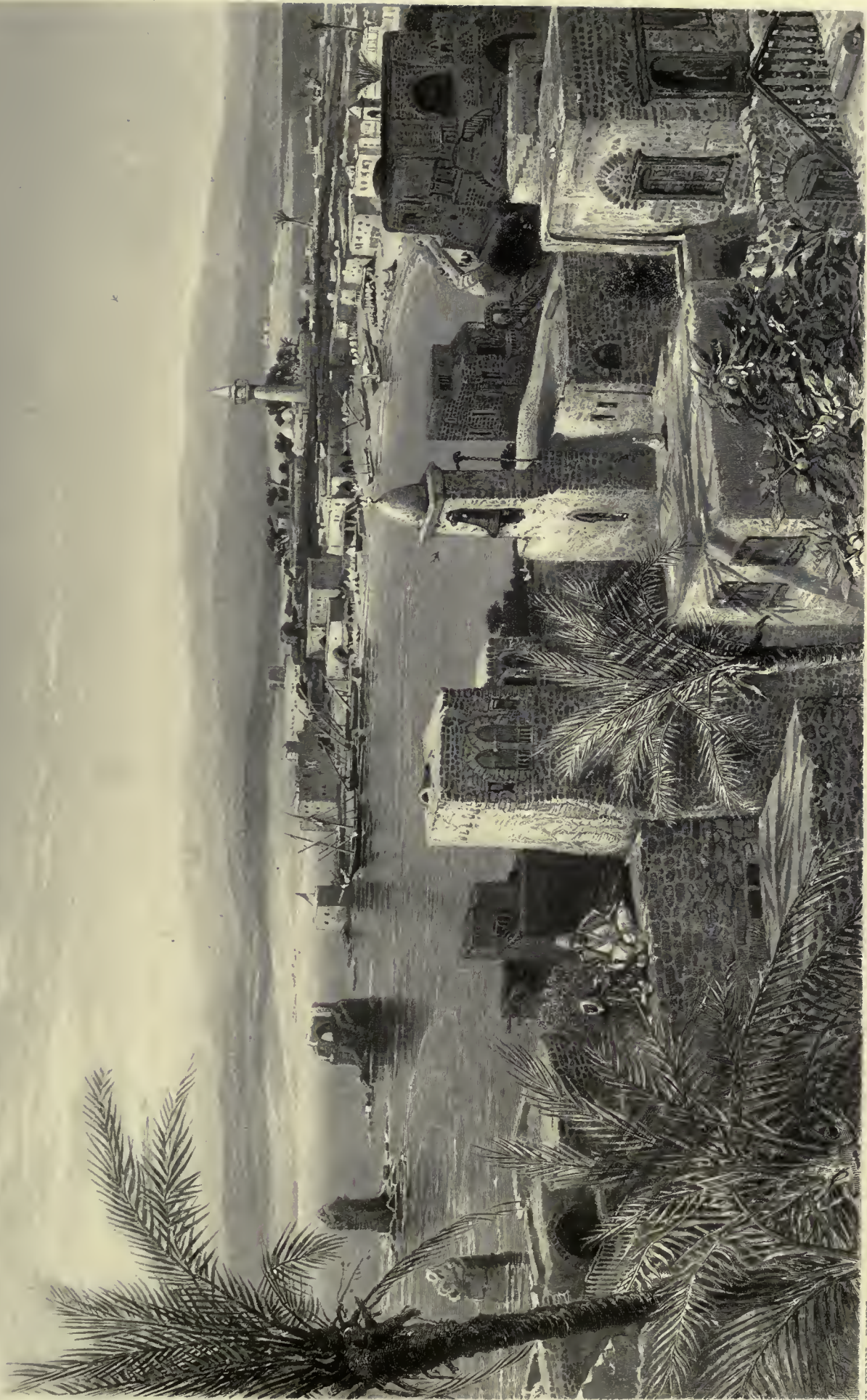
gardens, such as have long adorned the environs of Sidon.

But these do not reach the shore, and we pass them on the left. On the right several grim skeletons of vessels, driven ashore from the dangerous anchorage of the roadstead, stand out from the shallow sea; and just opposite to them is a fine old

fountain, an arched building covering several cisterns fed by springs beneath, and much resorted to by the inhabitants of this side of the city. Twenty years ago Tyre, now called Es Sûr, was a miserable, squalid village; but it has latterly much increased, and though still chiefly a labyrinth of ruins, yet contains a population of over seven thousand, with some bazaars fairly stocked. A few small craft may generally be seen in the roadstead, and a number of fishing

vessels in the inner harbour. Just at the north gate of the city, by which we enter, is the principal market, where scarlet leather, millstones from the Haurân, and tobacco, are the staples of commerce. The inhabitants are chiefly fishermen and some dyers, though the old Tyrian dyes are no more, and we may search in vain for Tyrian purple. The streets are most wretched, very few feet wide and wattled over at intervals with palm leaves and decayed brushwood; while windowless, mud-floored hovels pestle among huge fragments of polished granite and porphyry columns prostrate in rubbish. The strip of sand between the well and the gate has accumulated on the causeway by which Alexander the Great united the city to the mainland; for Tyre originally was an island rather less than a mile in length, containing about one hundred and twenty-five acres, and with the harbours between it and the mainland, on which was the larger city of Palæotyrus. The moles or breakwaters of the ancient harbours can still be seen both on the north and the south sides of the peninsula, the greater part of which consists of ruin-strewn fields, affording a charming camping ground, especially to the west of the modern town, where the tents can be pitched within a few yards of the waves, looking down on the mass of granite columns and marble blocks which pave the bottom of the clear sea (see page 59). The ruins of Tyre above the water are few indeed, and beyond the moles and harbour are none which carry us back to the times of Phœnician glory and supremacy, before its conquest by Alexander the Great. One, and one only, building of any interest remains, and its associations are far indeed removed from the history which must most absorb the traveller's thoughts, the story of the queen of commerce, the mistress of the seas, and the mother of mighty nations. The Cathedral of the Crusaders occupies a conspicuous position at the south-east angle of the shrunken city, and though roofless, and at the west end wholly demolished, is still comparatively perfect (see page 56). It is one of the largest of the many Crusading churches of Syria, and occupies the site of a much older and yet more historic building, the basilica of Constantine. Within the last few years the German Government have obtained a sort of protectorate over it, and prevented the utter demolition which threatened it as a mere quarry for building. They have also excavated much of the débris which choked the interior, and revealed many details of its architecture. Comte de Vogüé, the first living authority on Syrian architecture, fixes the date of its foundation 1125 A.D., by the Venetian Crusaders, who dedicated it to St. Mark. But it has an earlier history still. The original church was built by Constantine, Paulinus was its bishop, and the historian Eusebius delivered the oration at its consecration, which he has preserved at full length in his Ecclesiastic History, simply stating that it was the address delivered on the occasion by a certain man of moderate merit. In that church were laid the bones of the great father of the Church, Origen. But in evil times and national convulsions it had become, we know not how, a ruin, and the Crusaders nobly restored it. It measured two hundred and sixteen feet long by one hundred and thirty-six feet wide, and though we dare not controvert the architectural decision of De Vogüé, it is evident to every one who sees it that the restoration was on the old lines, on the Greek basilica model, not on the Latin. There are the three

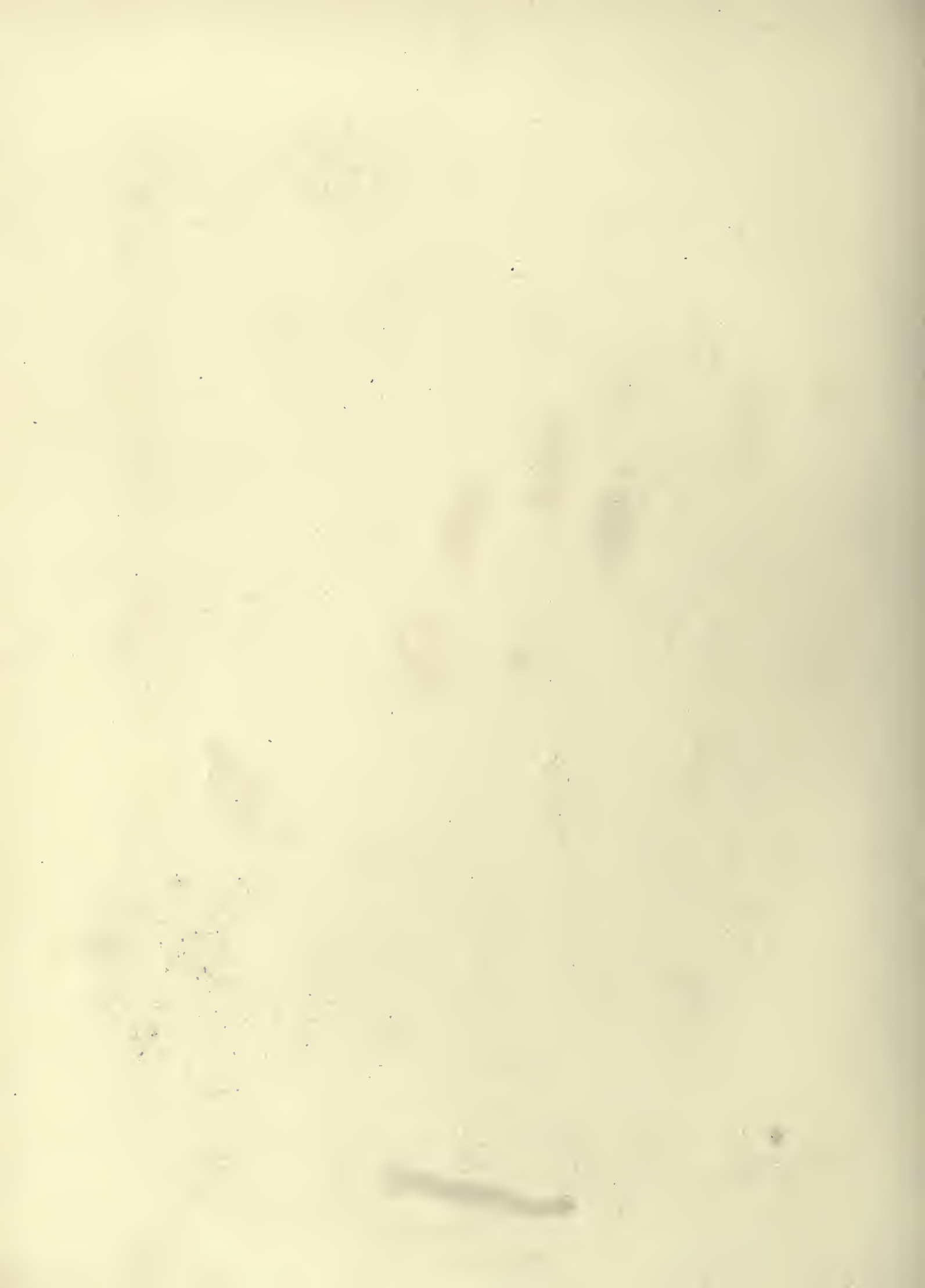
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H. FENN. PINKE

TYRE.

S. BRADSHAW. SCULPT.



apses at the east end, which the Muslims have since incorporated into the city walls, and I cannot but think that both the greater part of these apses as well as the lower corners of the walls are the original work of Constantine. A few years ago the interior was crowded with squalid hovels clustering on the sides. Now all have been cleared out, and the area is only strewn by the colossal red granite columns, which once stood upright and supported the roof. These shafts and pilasters, some of them double, are from six to eight feet in diameter and



THE GATE OF TYRE (SÛR).

There are two springs of fresh water on the north side of the peninsula, one of which is close to this gate. It has been conjectured that they are connected with the fountains of Râs el 'Ain.

about twenty-six feet long, yet they are only broken fragments, and no doubt were utilised by Constantine from some of the condemned heathen temples. Though their removal has been more than once attempted by the Muslims, they proved too massive to be broken, too heavy to be lifted. Of the resting place of Origen no mark remains. Frederick Barbarossa's body is believed to lie under the central apse. The emperor died at Tarsus, and all down that long coast of Syria day after day the funeral procession marched, till, halting at Antioch, there was

deposited the heart and intestines of the grand Crusader, while his bones were carried on hither, to be lain within the limits of the Sacred Land. Few churches, indeed, can vie in historic memories with the Cathedral of Tyre.

Yet when we climb up, and, standing on the apse of that old church, look forth upon the



RUINS OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH AT TYRE.

Eusebius describes this building as the most splendid of all the temples of Phœnicia. Among the ruins there is a double column of red syenite granite, now prostrate, consisting of two parallel connected shafts of great size.

sand-heaps on our left, the sea beyond, and the breakwaters, and see the red jagged fragments to the right, the long history of that church is but of yesterday when compared with the remote

memories behind it. Egypt and Assyria may carry us many centuries farther still, but what is their direct connection with us when compared with Phœnicia? That strange and mysterious people, where are they? What descendants have they left? Where can we trace them? They were scarcely of the land. Like some fowl of the sea, which never touches shore or visits



the land, save to rear its young, the Phœnician asked no territory, conquered no nations, yet was found on every coast. These original settlements of Tyre and Sidon, what are they? Along that straight, monotonous, havenless Syrian coast, the very last we should have imagined to have fostered a spirit of commerce and enterprise, here and there in front of some sandspits, or at the foot of some headland, there rises from the water a ridge of reefs, or a rocky islet. Like some sea-swallow, the Phœnician seized on this. There he made his perch, and took breath for a while between his adventurous voyages. Such rocky islets or headlands are Tyre (see above), Sidon (see page 45), Berytus, Gebal, Botrys, Tripoli, and Aradus [the modern

Beirût (see pages 28 and 41), Jebeil, Batrûn, Tarabalûs (see pages 5 and 9), and Ruad], most of them very similar in position, and three of them—Jebeil, Batrûn, and Tarabalûs, in their little reef of rocks fronting and parallel to the headland, close reproductions of the site of Tyre. Tyre, though historically the daughter of Sidon, soon became the leading city of the



TOMB OF KIRAM.

KABR HIRÂM.

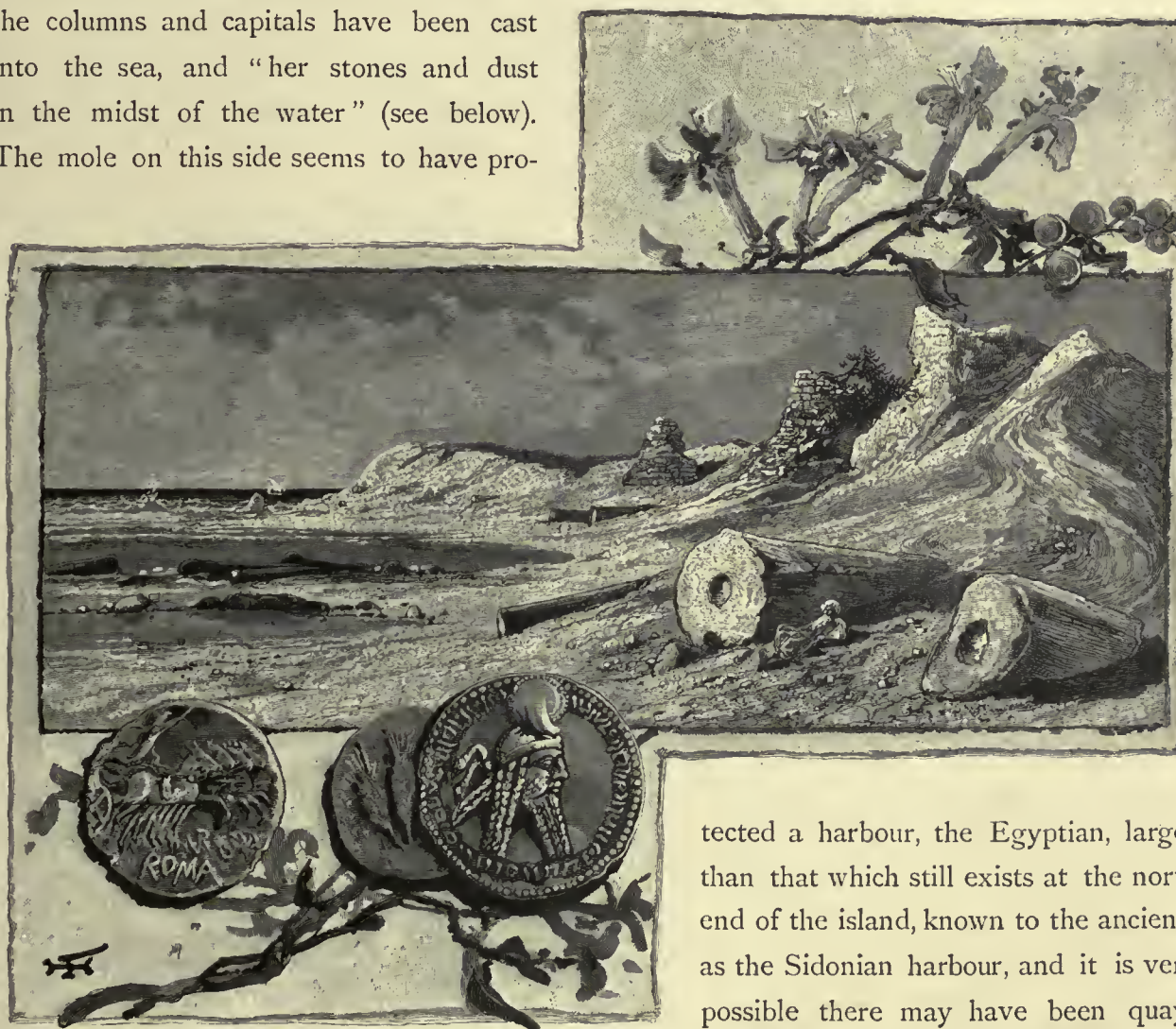
And the neighbouring village of Hanâwîeh, with a view of the peninsula of Tyre as it appears from this spot.

federation. What does not Europe owe in the way of civilisation to these decaying villages? We have but to look to the glowing denunciations of Ezekiel to see how vast and how varied was their trade. Tyre was the inventress and the cradle of glass manufacture, and for centuries she retained her pre-eminence. It was from Tyre that some adventurous monks, pilgrims from the coasts of Northumbria, brought into England the secret of the manufacture, and planted on the banks of the Wear the first glass works of the West, in the days of the Saxon heptarchy. Hence came the brilliant dyes which made resplendent the royal robes of kings, hence the bronze and metal which equipped the armies of antiquity. The tiny crafts of Phœnicia penetrated into unknown seas, and brought back to the East the news of a world beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Tyre worked the mines of Spain, and freighted her ships with the tin of Cornwall. From this little rock sprang the men who dotted the western shores of the Mediterranean with their colonies. She was the mother of that Carthage which succeeded her as mistress of the seas, and all but wrested the empire of the world from her rival, Rome. But chief of all, to Phœnicia we owe our alphabet. Hence Cadmus borrowed those characters which have enshrined the strains of Homer, and have become the framework for the expression of every language of Europe.

When this marvellous city rose we know not, for its indigenous literature has perished, and we have but a few inscriptions and a few characters on coins to tell us what was its language. But at the time of the Exodus, 1450 B.C., it was a strong city (Joshua xix. 29), and in the reign of David it was famous, not only for its maritime prowess, but for its arts and skill; its seamen brought him cedars from Lebanon, its masons and carpenters built his palace. Still closer was the intercourse between Hiram and Solomon, who formed a treaty of alliance and commerce. Israel fed the great city, which supplied the architect, the workmen, and many of the materials for the Temple. But of the Tyre of that day we can trace nothing, unless it be the massive substructions of the harbour. Yet throughout the long period of Persian supremacy, Tyre and her sister cities escaped all molestation. Careful to maintain their trade, the men of Tyre always made judicious alliances, and having no ambition for territory on shore, were voluntary allies rather than vassals, and though Sidon was conquered by Ochus, Tyre remained until its capture by Alexander after a seven months' siege. The numberless granite columns, which strew the shore and form the bed of the sea, all belong to the second Tyre, which soon rose from its ashes, and continued to flourish till destroyed at the end of the second century by Pescennius Niger. Again it rose and maintained its prosperity till the time of the Crusades. It was long held by the Christians, and in its cathedral was celebrated one of the last religious services held before the final embarkation of the last remnant of the chivalry of Europe. The final blow to its prosperity was given by the conquest of Syria by the Ottomans, in 1516 A.D.

But we must not run on into a history of Tyre. We have been led to muse on the past, as we wonder how she has become so utterly ruined and where her ruins are. Perhaps they have served as a quarry for the whole coast, and her stones may now be for the most part in Acre and Beirût. It has been the fate of places which have been continuously inhabited to have far

less to reveal of their old history than have those which have been destroyed and then deserted. Still the evidences of a great past are not far to seek. As we stroll along the shore, especially on the south side of the promontory, the shingle is composed of broken pottery almost as much as of natural pebbles, the old columns lie in every direction, pierced by the pholas and festooned with seaweed. The south side gives the clearest idea of the plan and position of the ancient city, on the foundations and massive sea-walls of which we may note the fishermen day after day spreading their nets, while the columns and capitals have been cast into the sea, and "her stones and dust in the midst of the water" (see below). The mole on this side seems to have pro-



THE REMAINS OF TYRE.

The shore is strewn from one end to the other, along the edge of the water and in the water, with columns of red and grey granite of various dimensions, the only remaining monuments of ancient Tyre.

tected a harbour, the Egyptian, larger than that which still exists at the north end of the island, known to the ancients as the Sidonian harbour, and it is very possible there may have been quays and wharfs where is now the broad belt of sand south of Alexander's Causeway.

This was very narrow at first, but the current has rapidly silted up the shallow bay, till the neck is almost as wide as the island itself. The process has long been going on, for at the south-east angle of the former island, and on what was once sea, stands what is called the Algerian tower, a portion of an old line of fortification constructed of the materials of earlier buildings, yet itself certainly not later than the time of the Crusaders, and probably part of their line of defence. The present gate (see page 55) is probably also on the site of the mediæval portal; but, though duly guarded, its use

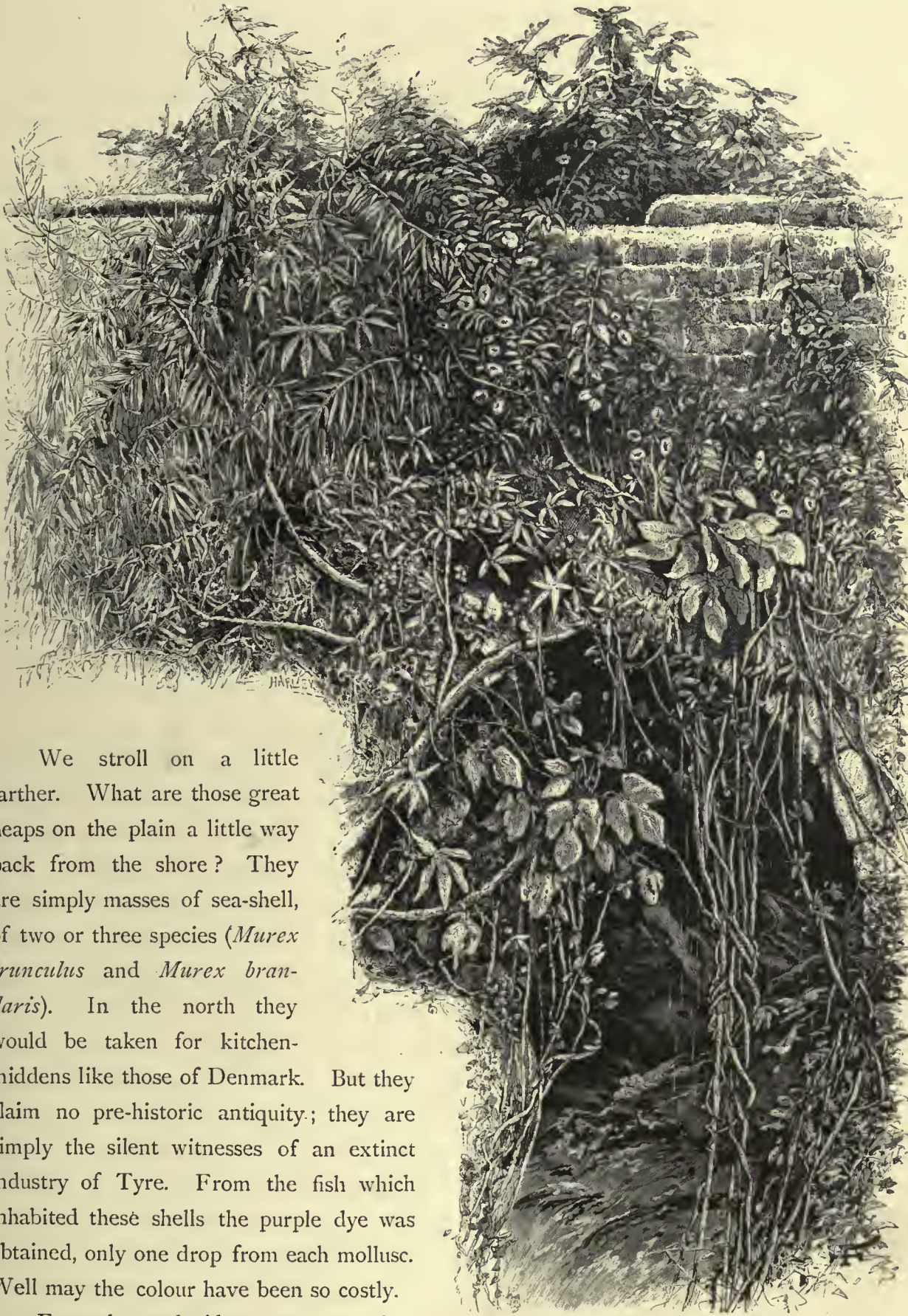
has gone, for only fragments of the wall remain beyond the limits of the shrunken town, and on all sides the place is completely open, almost every street having a free exit into the open ground beyond. If we are inclined to wonder at the paucity of the remains of old Tyre, we must remember that for ages the site has been a quarry for building material. We noticed



RESERVOIRS OF RÂS EL 'AIN AND PART OF THE ROMAN AQUEDUCT.

Close to this spot stood Palæotyrus, of which no vestige now remains, the materials having been carried away by Alexander (332 B.C.) to construct the mole or causeway which unites insular Tyre to the mainland.

close to the modern houses a pit recently excavated for this purpose, not less than thirty feet below their level. Yet even at that depth the walling was composed of the broken columns and material of still older buildings. Lower still, therefore, must lie buried the Tyre of Hiram and of Solomon.



We stroll on a little farther. What are those great heaps on the plain a little way back from the shore? They are simply masses of sea-shell, of two or three species (*Murex trunculus* and *Murex brandaris*). In the north they would be taken for kitchen-middens like those of Denmark. But they claim no pre-historic antiquity; they are simply the silent witnesses of an extinct industry of Tyre. From the fish which inhabited these shells the purple dye was obtained, only one drop from each mollusc. Well may the colour have been so costly.

From the south side we can proceed to the reservoir of Râs el 'Ain, "the head of

AQUEDUCT, RÂS EL 'AIN.

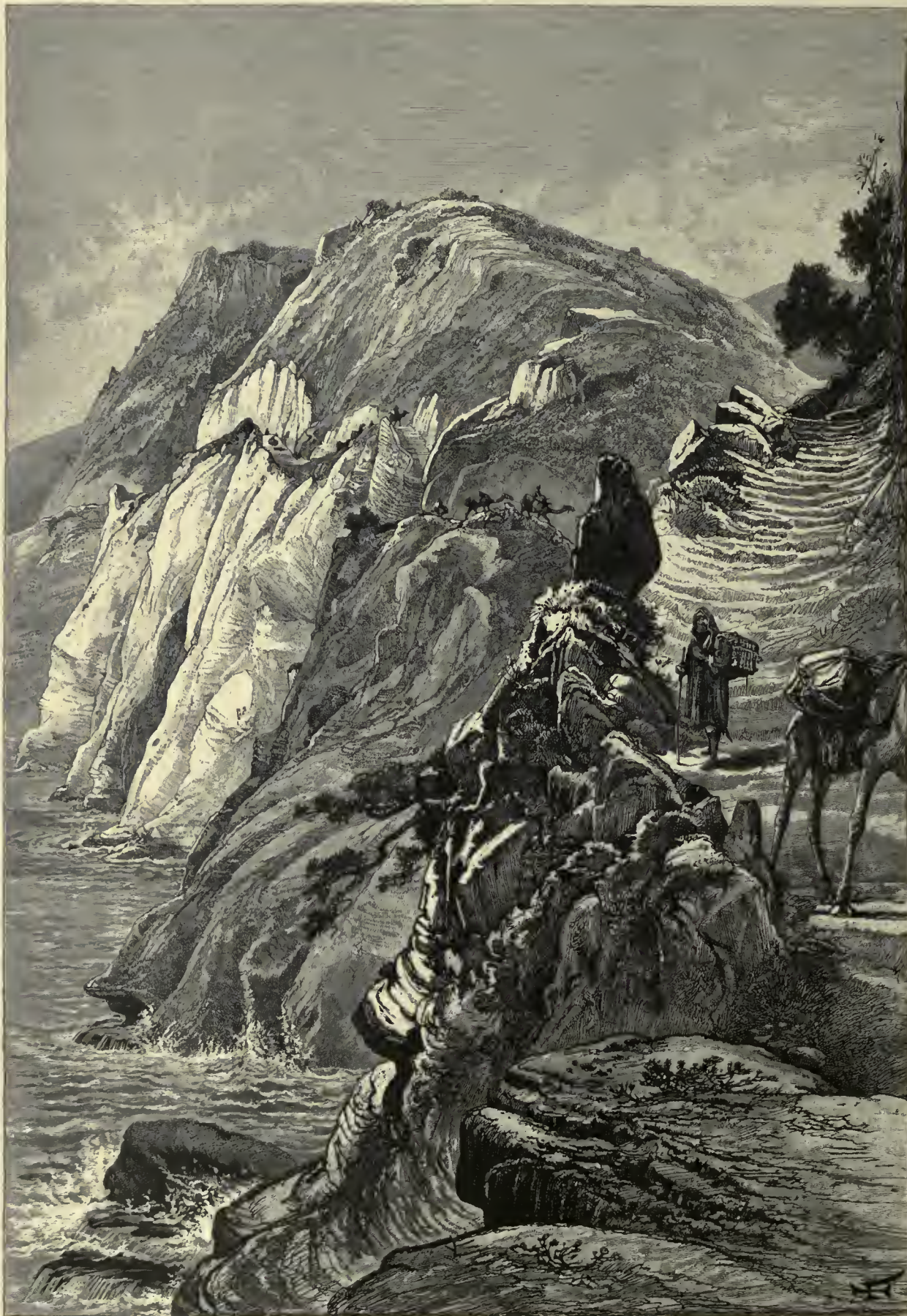
Of Saracenic origin, its slightly pointed arches are in many places almost concealed by luxuriant vegetation.

the fountain," the farther limit of Old Tyre, or Palæotyrus (see page 60). The mainland Tyre, as this really was, claimed to be the original city, though we may feel certain that the island was from the very earliest existence of the colony inhabited and fortified, and the commercial centre. There are few if any remains of the mainland Tyre above ground, but sufficient in the way of foundations to show the great extent of the city. Râs el 'Ain is an hour's ride, about four and a half miles from insular Tyre, and along the shore, from the one to the other, the city extended. It was not fortified, and doubtless many of the dwellings were suburban, with orchards and gardens extending back towards the hills. But all is now corn-plain or waste. We can trace the line of the aqueduct by which water was conveyed from these springs to the island. Râs el 'Ain itself is a picturesque group of ruins, with some water-mills and hovels, and the group of trees are refreshing. The springs are numerous and copious. The drainage of the sandstone strata appears to be concentrated towards this spot, and gushes forth with great force. It is collected in great tanks of masonry, each built round a great spring, which pours immense volumes of water with great force from the bottom of the reservoirs (see page 60). The original intention of these massive structures, which in some points recall the masonry of the Pools of Solomon, near Bethlehem (see page 145, vol. i.), has evidently been to force the water up to a sufficient height to supply the aqueduct. This is now completely ruined, but can be traced the whole way along the plain, first of all trending rather inland, till almost opposite the island it reaches a massive ruin, probably another great cistern, from which the aqueduct turned westward to the shore (see page 57). The masonry of the aqueduct, the shape of the arches, point to the Roman period as the probable date of its construction (see page 60), but the reservoirs themselves may claim a much greater antiquity. Tradition and mediæval writers popularly assign them to King Solomon, and some later writers ascribe them to Alexander. But the great conqueror had enough to do to take the city and at once left it, and it is scarcely likely that he should immediately after his conquest have set about such a great work. Far more reasonably may we believe that here, if nowhere else, we have a silent evidence of the genius of the old Phœnicians; and I am not aware of any similar work elsewhere constructed by the Romans. That they constructed the aqueduct we may well believe, but probably on the lines of a previous channel, for we may be very sure that the first operation of any besieger, whether Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian, Greek, or Roman, would be to interrupt this great water supply. Indeed, one aqueduct is as late as the Saracenic or Crusading times (see page 61). It starts from the fourth and smallest cistern, has pointed arches, and has been used for the purpose of irrigating the plain. The largest cistern is octagonal, sixty-six feet in diameter, inside measure, twenty-five feet high, and its wall, which is massively revetted, slopes gently from the ground to the summit, where the masonry is eight feet thick. This wall, of this enormous strength, is bound with the finest and hardest cement. The water is impregnated with lime, and has thickly encrusted all the reservoirs, as well as formed massive stalagmites both round the cisterns and along the course of the aqueduct. The only use to which this mighty work is now applied is the turning of a water-wheel for a

corn-mill, and the water running through leaks and over the masonry, is wasted as it works its way uselessly to the sea. These springs are first mentioned in the records of ancient Tyre as having been cut off by Shalmaneser when he withdrew from the siege, which certainly implies their importance at that very early date. In the time of the Crusades the water was used for the irrigation of the whole plain, which was cultivated and full of fruit-trees, and especially of sugar-cane, in strange contrast to its present half-desolate state.

But what must this plain and Old Tyre have been in the days of Israel, when, relying upon the impregnable insular fortress and their fleets which ruled the sea, the merchant princes had their villas and palaces all along the plain for many miles in the open country (for the fortifications never extended to Palæotyrus), and all the wealth and art of the age was lavished on the furniture, the gardens and the baths of her "whose builders had perfected her beauty" and "set forth her comeliness." Ebony and ivory, the gems of India and the riches of the East, bright tin from Cornwall, the gold of Tarshish, the spices of Arabia, the fine linen and brodered work of Egypt, silver and lead, tin and iron from afar, coral and agate from Syria, rich fabrics from Mesopotamia, such were some of the treasures and the decorations of the mother of commerce. But now she "is broken by the seas in the depth of the waters, and her merchandise and all her company in the midst of her are fallen." Yet it would be difficult to find a more lovely moonlight walk than along this beach from Râs el 'Ain to Tyre, with the light beaming far on the water, where now no gallant galley with oars can be seen, but the ghost-like black columns, gaunt in the moonlight, look like spectres on the sea, mourning the fate of their proud city. The ride to Hiram's Tomb (see page 57) may be accomplished from Râs el 'Ain as easily as from Tyre, following the line of the aqueduct (see page 60) for two miles and then turning towards the hills, which here rise very gradually from the plain. Very near Hiram's Tomb, to the southward, is the little village of Hanâwîeh, surrounded by orchards and olive yards, with many tombs in the sides of the hills. In these tombs have recently been discovered many interesting specimens of Phœnician or at least pre-Roman glass. In a sepulchre, which this year was opened by a charcoal-burner in digging up an old tree root, a complete set of funereal glass was found, undisturbed as when first placed in the newly-occupied tomb, which was a very small niche just large enough for a body and about four feet high, hewn at the foot of a rock against which earth and rubbish had accumulated. At each of the four corners of the tomb was a lachrymatory, much larger than the ordinary or later Roman ones and with a very long neck. At the upper part of the tomb were placed two flat dishes, one about six inches, the other twelve inches in diameter, for the meat and bread offerings for the dead, and a glass flask of antique and graceful shape for the wine.

The tombs in all these hills may be counted by thousands, but they have been rifled and rifled again centuries ago; many of them afford evidence of successive occupation by the dead of epochs distant from each other. For instance, to many of the old Phœnician tombs, which may be recognised at once by the style of their sculpture, there have been added Roman or Greek façades in various different styles, and niches for statues, subsequent to the original



RÂS EL ABYAD (WHITE CAPE), THE LADDER OF TYRE,
From the south side. The rock-cut undulating road, with its shallow steps, is in many places nearly two hundred feet above the sea.



construction. Some contain excavations in the flooring of the cave just large enough to contain a body and roughly hewn to its shape, with a groove running round to admit the covering slab. On the top of this we shall find the rich marble sarcophagus of a later date. Examining again, we shall find rudely carved Christian symbols, of the period of those of the catacombs of Rome—the equilateral cross, the sacred monogram in a variety of forms, the α and ω , and the like.

Hiram's Tomb, "Kabr Hirâm," as it is called, by far the most interesting relic of Tyre left intact, is very near the little village of Hanâwîeh. It stands slightly retired from the brow of the uplands, close by the way-side, corn-fields behind it, and the quiet orchard ground in front. Whether it be the tomb of the great Phœnician monarch or not there is no possibility of

RÂS EL ABYAD.

Showing the north or Tyrian side. The little tower in the distance is a Turkish guard-house where tolls are levied, as it commands the pass to and from Acre.

proving. One argument for its great antiquity is its extreme simplicity and its dissimilarity from any sepulchral structures of the Greek age. The great repertory of Phœnician monuments is on the wonderful plain of Amrit, in Northern Syria, the ancient Marathus, opposite the island of Ruad, or Arvad. There is not a solitary inscription among them all, and Renan has demonstrated to the satisfaction of antiquaries that they are all long prior to the time of Alexander the Great. But the most archaic of those unique and massive sepulchres are in style and workmanship decidedly later than Hiram's Tomb, and yet they are formed on a similar model. The natural inference to any one seeing the tombs of Marathus and this of Tyre for the first time, would be that the architects of the former were familiar with such constructions as this, but had no idea of the Greek or Syro-Greek sepulchral architecture.

The Tomb of Hiram, for so we love to believe it as well as call it, is a grand massive sarcophagus, laid on a massive megalithic pedestal of dressed limestone, but without any trace of the Phœnician or Jewish bevel, standing in solitary desolation, commanding the sea and that city of Tyre over which Hiram ruled. The pedestal is composed of three courses of great stones, more than twelve feet by eight, and six feet thick. The third course is still thicker and projects over the others. On this is placed the great sarcophagus, hollowed out for the body, and over it still remains the lid, slightly pyramidal in form, a single block, twelve feet long by five thick. Immediately behind the tomb two flights of steps have recently been opened out, evidently coeval with it, and leading to a vaulted chamber not under but exactly behind the mausoleum. This was cleared out and examined by Renan, but no trace of inscription or indication of its purpose or date discovered.

From Hiram's Tomb it is little more than half an hour south-east to the village of Kanah, with its name unchanged since the days of Joshua, when it was a town of Asher. The whole district is strewn with broken sarcophagi, but there are some very interesting Phœnician sculptures, rarely visited, on the side of a very rocky hill overhanging a dell to the north of the road half-way to Kanah, called the Wâdy el 'Akkab, or by others El Afid. Here have been quarries very extensively worked in ancient times, and the rock in many places has been cut down perpendicularly. On many of these faces are rude sculptures and especially many cartouches, somewhat Egyptian in style, but very different in type as regards the figures within the cartouch. On one face of rock, besides the cartouches are nine figures in a row, the largest in the centre seated, the others, four on each side, about four feet high, standing. On another rock is a female draped figure standing, much more Assyrian than Egyptian in the style of dress, which is full. All the figures have been cut in the rough face of the rocks, which have not been squared or dressed to receive them.

From Kanah there is a lovely ride into the interior, an excursion which will well repay the traveller for the extra day it will cost, or he may traverse the valleys of Asher and Naphtali till he reaches the magnificent mediæval castle of Tibnîn. The route is up the Wâdy 'Ashûr. It is a narrow valley with a very steep descent, which winds down to the coast in a serpentine, meandering course. Frequently it contracts into a romantic rocky glen, so narrow at the

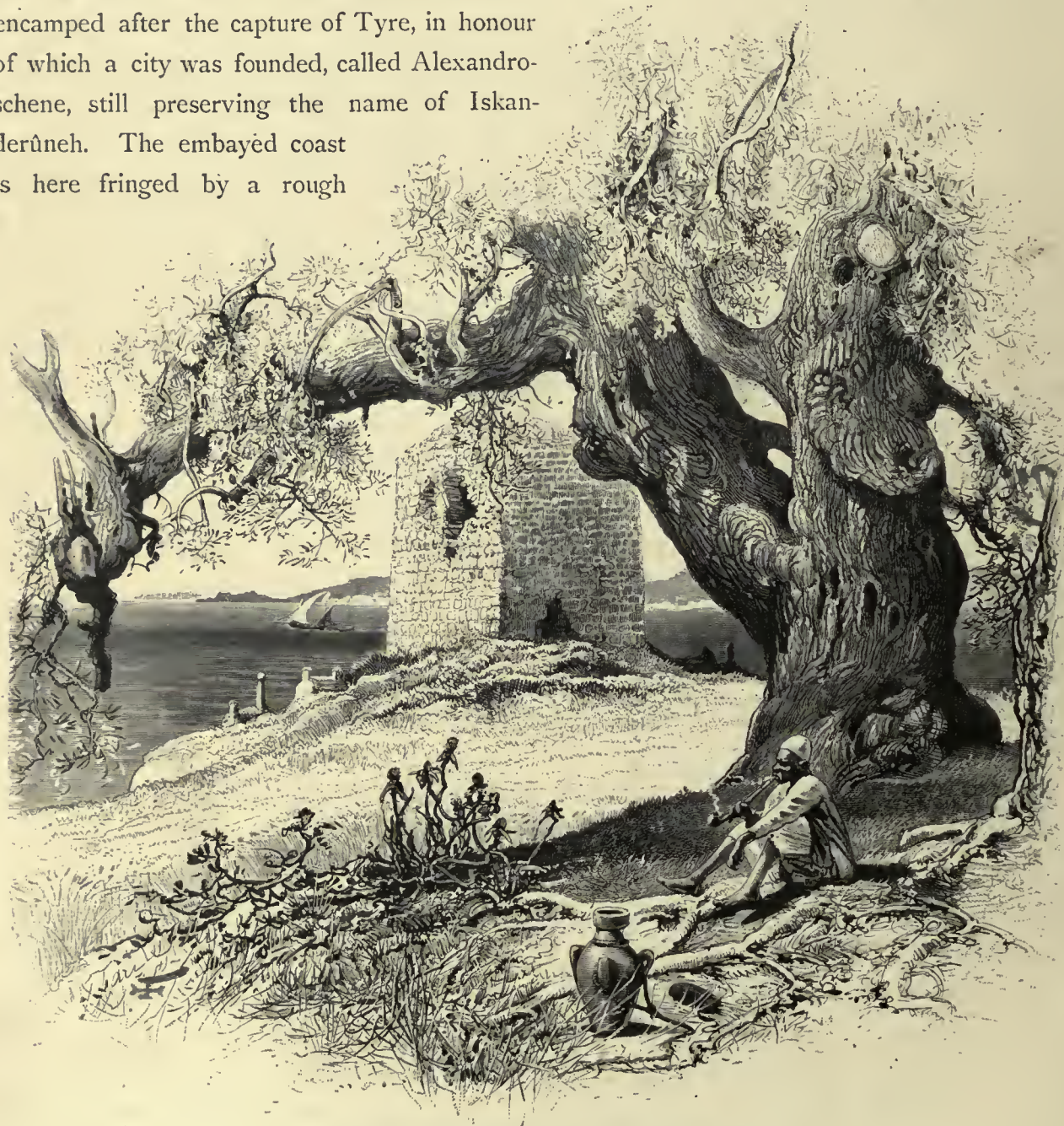
bottom that it is difficult for a horseman to pass a laden camel without dismounting, and where he may touch the cliffs on either side with his stick. The sides of the enclosing hills gently slope back, timber being absent, but its place taken by dense brushwood, lentisk, myrtle, arbutus, the lovely storax, and the Judas-tree all in blossom together, with an undergrowth of endless variety of flowers, generally very different from those of Esdraelon and Galilee, and partaking more of the character of the Lebanon flora—especially a number of ferns of northern type.

Just at the mouth of the valley is a little plain, and high up in the rocks on the north side of this opening are some very curious sculptures. On the face of the cliff is cut a square recess about thirty-two inches square, and thirty inches deep. It is set in a bevelled frame of five steps, each two inches deep, cut in the rock. On the back wall of the niche is a fine piece of delicate sculpture, rather weathered. There is a group of five figures, the central one seated and two standing on each side, apparently offering gifts. Over the group is engraved the Egyptian symbol of eternity, with the outstretched wings, the disk, serpents, and other emblems. In many of these Phœnician remains we have the Egyptian, in others the Assyrian recalled, but nowhere has yet been found anything resembling the Hittite type.

When we reach the head of the Wâdy 'Ashûr, north of the village of Kefra, the summit of the hill affords a magnificent view. Three thousand feet beneath is the strip of the Phœnician plain, with Tyre conspicuous, jutting out from its neck of sand into the sea, fringed by the Mediterranean. Turning round, Hermon (see pages 96 and 137, vol. ii.) and the craters of the Lejah stretch from north to south, with the great castle of Shūkif distinct, perched on its crag south-west of Hermon. One bit of snow behind it marks the beginning of the Lebanon (see page 99, vol. ii.), while on the top of an isolated cone immediately to the east frowns the castle of Tibnin, as though still impregnable, and giving the idea of a stupendous fortress, looking all the larger from its isolation.

And now, having surveyed the highlands, we will descend by that charming glen again to Râs el 'Ain (see page 60), and after a farewell glance at its dripping cisterns and fairylike festoons of maiden-hair fern, we continue along the shore till we reach the bluff headland of Râs el Abyad, "White Cape," which boldly projects into the sea, the sharp and clearly defined boundary of the Phœnician plain (see page 65). The chalky headland is often called the Ladder of Tyre, and a true ladder it would be were it not that many of its rungs are wanting, and the path, being worn in the cliff's side without the slightest bridge or fence and overhanging the sea two or three hundred feet below, is somewhat trying to novices in Palestine riding. From the crest of the pass is a very impressive view of the Phœnician coast. Desolate as the plain is, it is, at least in early summer, green, and shows well with its girdle of sand curving gracefully as it recedes and then runs out in the headland of Tyre. Curving again inwards, from this point we can follow it beyond the promontory of Sūrafend, which forms the head of the second bow. The ridge of the limestone hills behind varies in colour, through blending shades of purples, reds, and yellows, closing with the white and glittering brow on which we stand, while behind all tower the snowy ranges of Jebel Sūnnin and Jebel esh Sheikh (Hermon), from forty

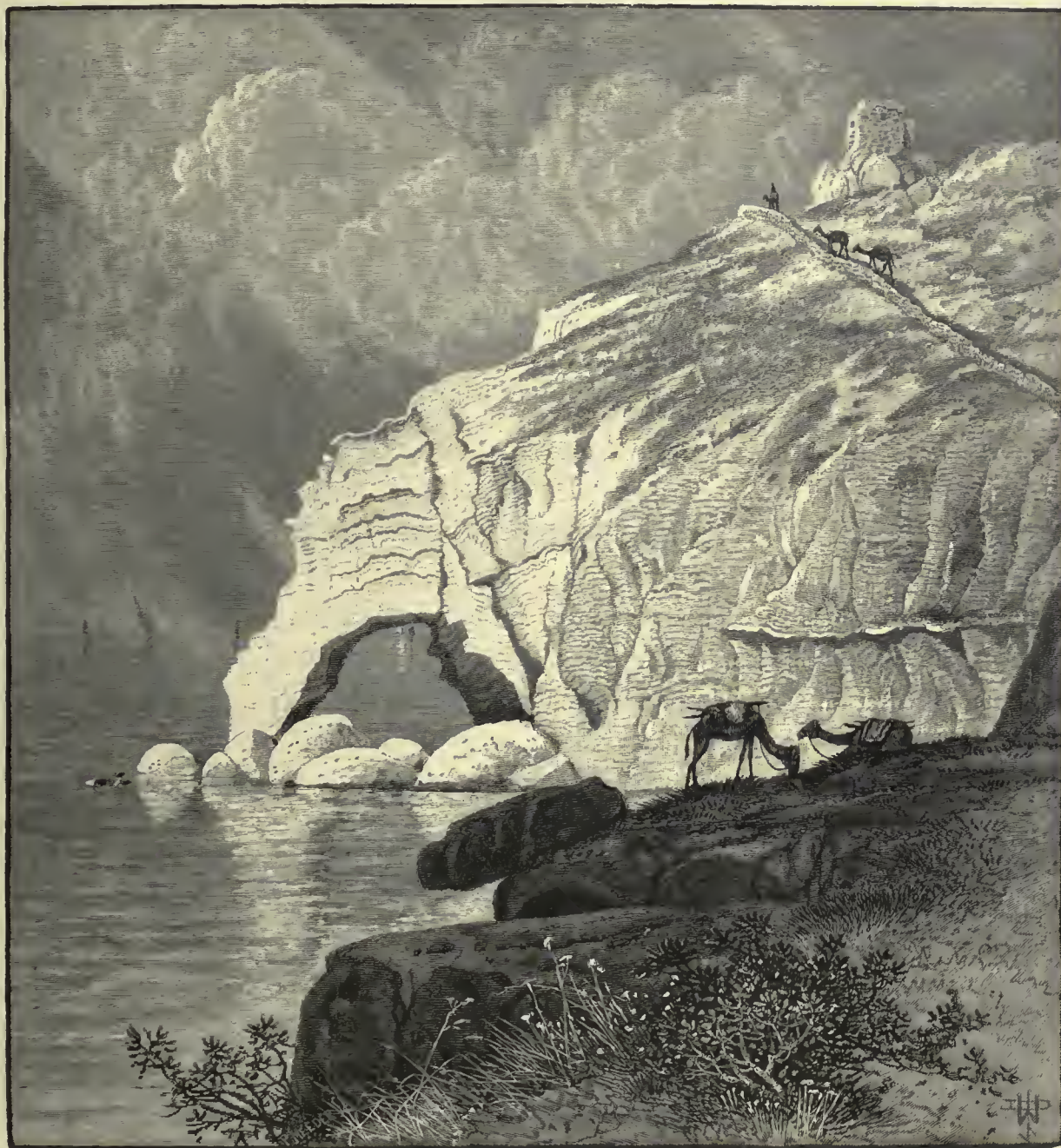
to sixty miles distant. From the Ladder of Tyre is a very narrow stony plain, extending in a crescent shape for about six miles as the crow flies, but over eight to ride, to the next headland, Râs en Nâkûrah (see page 69), beyond which commences at once the plain of Acre. Between the two promontories, slightly retired from the shore, are the ruins of a considerable town without a history, save that here Alexander encamped after the capture of Tyre, in honour of which a city was founded, called Alexandroschene, still preserving the name of Iskanderûneh. The embayèd coast is here fringed by a rough



LOOKING TOWARDS TYRE FROM NÂKÛRAH.
An old olive-tree in the foreground and a Muslim cemetery on the hillside.

stony plain, or rather a gradual crescent-shaped slope, soon rising into low hills. One conspicuous Doric column still stands erect in the wilderness, with the shafts of many others, which have formed a colonnade, strewn around. A little farther on, marble fountains, fragments of tessellated pavement, gateways and architraves may be seen half buried in the thickets, with

many pieces of sculpture, some with emblems of Ashtaroth, or the moon goddess. No inscription has been found here, nor is there now a solitary inhabitant in the bay till we reach Nâkûrah at the next pass. The road or stony track keeps close along the shore and then



RÂS EN NÂKÛRAH.

The road over this headland, which has also been called the "Ladder of Tyre," has lately been greatly improved. South of it there is a spring called 'Ain el Musheirifeh.

climbs by the brow of the headland of Râs en Nâkûrah, the second Ladder of Tyre, the southern side of which is shown on this page.

So soon as the crest of the pass has been surmounted a fine view bursts suddenly upon the traveller. The rear of the rocky platform is shut in by Jebel Mushakka, and in front is spread the whole expanse of the plain of Acre, at least of its shore-line as far as Carmel. As the eye

follows the fringe of sand, a brown knob a few miles off marks the site of Zib, the ancient Achzib, the frontier town of Asher. Far beyond, another spit of sand is crowned by the buildings of the historic Acre, one of the few spots in Syria which has drawn to its focus a concentration of historic episodes, which link its name with almost every chapter in the story of Syria's fortunes for two thousand years. Beyond it again, in the far distance, the glass reveals the white spot in a crescent of green which, nestled under Carmel, marks the now flourishing Haifa. We here get our first view of Carmel from the north (see page 72). While able to realise its full extent, the effect of this outline is rather tame, as it gradually slopes towards the sea; yet the length of the ridge rising suddenly at this point of view from the plain, and forming a barrier across the horizon, makes it a conspicuous feature. But the nearer view, a green cultivated plain many miles in extent, studded with olive groves, with their grey-blue hue spangling the carpet, and each grove half concealing a village, affords a striking contrast to the solitudes of the Phœnician coast.

The road to Acre lies along the shore, but there are too many objects of interest to allow us to hurry onwards. Zib itself possesses nothing but its name to delay us. It is simply a modern village built on a mound of ruins. The valley of the little stream, Wâdy Kûrn, which is almost lost in the sands as it reaches Zib, where in ancient days it may have formed a creek for the fishing boats of Asher, is one which well repays a few days' exploration. The stream, swarming with fish, winds through a wooded glen which pushes into the plain, and forms one of the several spurs which, running from the Galilean hills, practically divide the plain of Acre from that of Esdraelon. A ride of four and a half hours from El Bûssah, in a south-east direction, brings us to the mediæval fortress known as Kûl'at el Kûrn, the *mons fortis*, Montfort of the Crusaders. Few travellers have entered it, but it is one of the finest ruins of Palestine. It is the first of that great chain of fortresses, stretching from the sea to Mount Hermon, by which the knights bade defiance to any attempted invasion from the north. Montfort was the apex of a triangle with the strongholds of Tyre and Acre at each extremity of its base. Thence a short day's march east found the battlements of Tibnîn. From that citadel, a few hours distant, the impregnable walls of Shūkîf (Belfort) commanded the passage of the Litâny. South of Shūkîf and Tibnîn, on the hill where now stands the village of Kaukâb el Hawa, Belvoir overlooked the passage of the Jordan and the bridge south of the Sea of Galilee, while northwards frowned Hûnîn (see pages 99 and 102, vol. ii.), commanding the plain of Hûleh; and within sight of it again the mighty fortress of Subcibeh (see pages 116 and 117, vol. ii.), overhanging Bâniâs, under Hermon, and guarding the eastern approaches from the Haurân. Every one of these was, while sufficiently garrisoned, impregnable under the conditions of mediæval warfare, and no invader could dare to leave them unmasked in his rear.

None of these, though the most decayed may compare with any other ruin in the country (for the Saracens, though they may have captured, took care to do no more than dismantle them), can rival Kûl'at el Kûrn in its state of preservation. Seven miles from the coast, one thousand

and fifty feet above the sea, and five hundred and sixty above the stream at its foot, a tongue of rock stands out between two ravines with perpendicular sides, not more than twenty yards wide and two hundred yards long, and cut off from the ridge behind by a deep artificial chasm. Where needful its sides have been coated with masonry, each tier sloping inwards, but the course above projecting three inches, so that scaling was impracticable. On the top are four successive fortresses, each successively defensible, and under each enormous cisterns, securing an independent supply of water. From the masonry of the lower structures it would seem that the fortress was originally Phœnician, that it was afterwards enlarged, and, perhaps, rebuilt by the Syrian Greeks or the Romans, and finally strengthened as we now see it by the Christian knights. It is, indeed, one of the most interesting relics of the long and hardly won, and still more hardly kept, dominion of our Norman ancestors. Yet all that history tells us of it is, that it was built by Hermann, grand master of the Teutonic knights, in A.D. 1229, and captured by Sultan Bibars in A.D. 1291. The knights, however, did little more than restore and strengthen fortifications of far earlier conquerors, as Phœnician, Greek or Maccabæan, and late Roman work, can be successively traced below the mediæval structures.

From Kûl'at el Kûrn the road to Acre passes through a partially wooded undulating plain for about four hours, till the maritime plain, drained by the classic river Belus (see page 72), now the Nahr Na'mân, is reached. The spurs of the Galilean lower hills run far down and form a low barrier between the plain of Acre and the plain of Esdraelon. From these spurs are fed the springs which supplied the aqueduct on the north. From the south-east the Belus (see page 72) works its way through its marshy bed, the sand almost absorbing it as it nears the shore.

The whole of this plain of Acre is studded, especially at the foot of the surrounding hills, with mud-built villages, many of them inheriting ancient names, but none bearing any other signs of antiquity. Thus we find to the south-east of Acre, Kabûl, the Cabul of Joshua and Kings, and north of it Amkah, the old Beth-emek; Semîriyeh, anciently Sherivron-meron; Abdeh, or Abdon; Jefât, the Jotopata of Josephus; and many others. The fame of the river Belus arises from the Greek tradition, that the invention of glass manufacture was due in the first instance to the accidental discovery on its banks of a vitreous mass produced by a fire of seaweed among the flints and sand, which some sailors had lighted when camping here. There are no traces of glass works to be seen, but we know that the Tyrians were the first manufacturers, and the tradition may very probably be true.

From the springs of the Nahr Na'mân is an interesting ride up a gentle wooded slope to Shefa 'Amr, one of the principal villages of the district. We know nothing of its biblical name or history. It first came into notice in the time of the Crusades, and was the head-quarters of Saladin when endeavouring to raise the siege of Acre. On the crest of the hill are the ruins of an extensive mediæval castle, apparently of Saracenic construction. Nothing of interest beyond its massive walls remains. There is a very fine view of Acre, Haifa, and the plain from this castle. Not a mile to the south, on the opposite hill, is another smaller ruined castle, El Burj.

Shefa 'Amr, which is chiefly Christian, also possesses a church and schools of the Church Missionary Society.

From Shefa 'Amr is a beautiful ride through wooded glens—almost the only park-like scenery with fine timber left on the west side of Jordan, but, alas! rapidly perishing under the



THE CITY OF ACRE (AKKA) FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

Mount Carmel is seen in the distance, beyond the bay. Muslim cemetery and aqueduct in the foreground.

axe of the charcoal-burner—till we reach the large village of Sefûriyeh, the ancient Sepphoris, Diocæsarea of the Romans, Kitron of Joshua, eight miles to the south-east, girt with olive groves. Here are ruins reminding us of the part that Sepphoris played in the history of the Herods and of the Crusades. The central apse of the Crusaders' church still exists, and above



THE CITY OF ACRE FROM THE SOUTH.

The mouth of the Nahr Na'mân, the ancient river Belus, in the foreground, where, tradition says, glass was first produced by an accidental combination of the necessary materials.

it on the hill is the castle; the lower portion of the work of the Herods, or even earlier, but the gateway and pointed arches above of the Crusading period (see page 48, vol. ii.). The place which once boasted a Roman mint is now a squalid Muslim village.

From Sefûriyeh good horse-paths lead both to Nazareth and to the coast.



GATE OF 'AKKA (ST. JEAN D'ACRE).

It is the only entrance to the city, and is situated near the south end of the eastern land wall, close to the head of the shallow harbour.

ACRE, THE KEY OF PALESTINE.

FROM every point of view the external appearance of 'Akka (Acre) is pre-eminently picturesque, and especially so from the deck of a yacht or steamer approaching the shore on a calm bright moonlight night, or, as an Arab would say, "when God's lantern is in the sky."

The bold western front of the city appears suddenly to rise up before us out of the sea, with its loopholed battlemented walls, its square towers, and its serviceable lighthouse at its southern extremity. In the northern division of the city, the lofty and curiously buttressed dome of the great mosque of Jezzar Pasha vividly reflects the moonlight (see page 76), and near to it the formidable-looking citadel is conspicuous. No city in Syria or Palestine so completely carries one back in fancy to Crusading and feudal times as does this city of 'Akka, especially when thus beheld from the sea; if the tall minaret of the great mosque were not

there to remind us of the local supremacy of the followers of the prophet Muhammed, we might easily imagine ourselves to be steering towards a stronghold still occupied by Crusading kings and by those Knights of St. John to whom the place owes its familiar European name of St. Jean d'Acre. We glide round the formidable-looking redoubt at the southern point of the promontory or rocky reef on which the city is built, and are soon safely anchored in the bay south of the shallow harbour (see page 72).

The broad plain of 'Akka (see page 80) is flooded with white mist which quivers in the moonlight, and makes the undulating hills of Galilee far away in the east, and the level range of Carmel in the south, look strangely unsubstantial and foundationless. But morning dawns and the mists are cleared away, and our illusions are to a great extent dispelled by a nearer approach to the city.

The distinctive feature of 'Akka is its complete isolation. There are people still living who remember when (during the peaceful rule of Suleiman, who became pasha of 'Akka a few years after the death of the tyrant Jezzar Pasha, in 1804) the plain north of the city was planted with pines and firs and groves of the rapidly growing *Melia Azederach*, commonly called the "Pride of India," a favourite tree for plantations in Syria and Palestine, with tender green foliage and pendent lilac blossoms, which are succeeded by clusters of yellow berries. But all the trees within a mile and a quarter of the city were cut down by order of Abdallah Pasha (the successor of Suleiman as governor of 'Akka, in 1820), lest they should serve as places of ambush for an enemy. The cleared space is now occupied by cotton-fields, melon grounds, and vegetable gardens, skirted by the aqueduct from El Kâbry, while near to the seashore there is a strip of fever-producing marsh-land. But there is nothing to intercept the view of the city (see page 72).

Nearly all other important walled towns of Syria and Palestine are by degrees over-leaping their boundaries and losing their original characteristics. The walls of Beirût (see page 28) have altogether disappeared except on the eastern side of the city. This is the natural result of peace and prosperity. Even the city of Jerusalem is rapidly extending beyond its walls, but happily only on the northern and western sides (see steel plate facing page 4, vol. i.). Colonel Sir Charles Wilson thus describes the impression made upon him by his recent visit to that city. "The approach to Jerusalem was to me a painful one. When I left in 1866, the only buildings outside the town were the Russian convent and two or three small houses; now new Jerusalem is almost as large as the old one. I had always liked to think of Jerusalem as the walled city, with its gates closed at nightfall, surrounded by olive gardens, which I had learned to know so well during the Survey, and it was anything but pleasant to ride over the hard metalled road through a long suburb, such as one sees round a third-class Italian town."

This refers to the approach to Jerusalem from the north-west by the carriage-road from Jaffa.

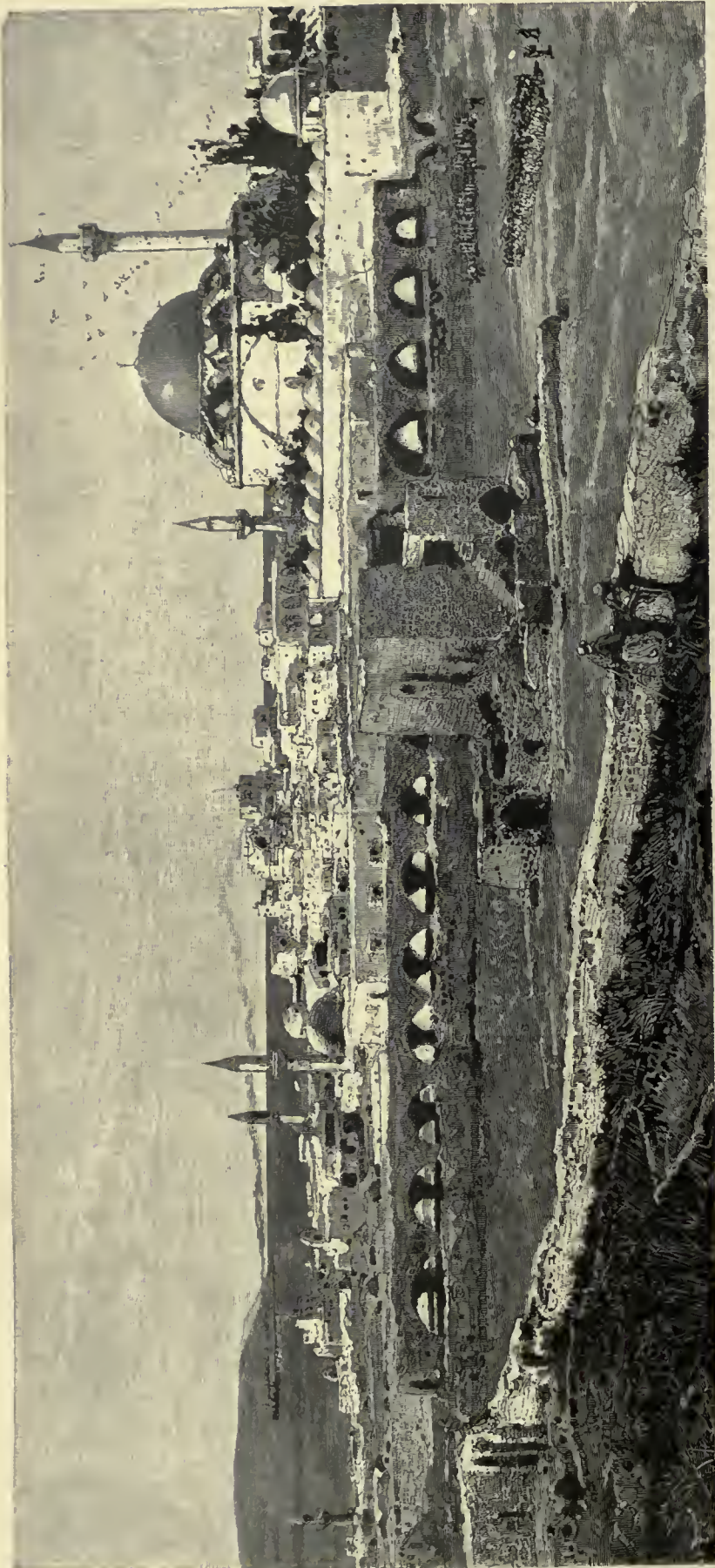
There is no prospect of any such innovations at 'Akka. The city is of irregular form,



RUINS OF AN AQUEDUCT EAST OF 'AKKA.

The position of the stork is quite characteristic, as storks instinctively take possession of lofty deserted structures, where they may build their huge nests in safety.

and contains an area of fifty acres. Its western sea front is its longest façade in a direct line, and leads one to expect to find the city very much larger than it really is. On the land side, facing the north and east, there is a double line of fortifications and a deep fosse (see page 76). The outer line was commenced by Jezzar Pasha in 1799, immediately after the retreat of Napoleon I., who had for sixty days besieged the city in vain, notwithstanding his eight deadly assaults on it. Napoleon's transport ships, which were to have landed his heavy ordnance and stores at Haifa (see page 83), were



GENERAL VIEW OF 'AKKA FROM THE NORTH-EAST, CARMEL IN THE DISTANCE.

More than half the space within the walls is occupied by Government buildings and barracks. On the right is the great mosque of Jezzar Pasha, with its curiously buttressed dome. It stands in a square court surrounded by domed chambers for the use of the mosque attendants and pilgrims. The steamer is approaching the town of Haifa, at the foot of Mount Carmel.

cleverly intercepted and captured by Admiral Sir Sydney Smith, and used in defence of 'Akka. Jezzar Pasha's outwork, which was completed and extended by the above-mentioned Abdallah Pasha in 1820, is four hundred feet in advance of the inner line of fortification, which was constructed by the celebrated Sheikh Dhâher-el-'Amer, who, having made himself master of Central Palestine, chose this city as his place of residence in the year 1749. It is conjectured that these two lines of fortification coincide with those of the Crusaders (see engraving).

The sea-wall along the south front of the city is of great strength; it is built of very large stones with marginal drafts and rustic bosses, characteristic of the work of the Crusaders. The harbour is formed by the curve of the narrowing reef on which the city is built towards the south-west, corresponding with the curve of the opposite shore to the south-east. There are the remains of

an ancient mole, visible under water, running eastwards from the south-east point of the reef, but within this line the average depth of the harbour is now only three feet. This partly arises from recent silting, but chiefly from having been purposely filled up early in the seventeenth



ABLUTIONS AFTER A MID-DAY MEAL.

Of all the people of the East it may be said, "except they wash their hands diligently, eat not," and after a meal it is urgently necessary when fingers have been used instead of forks.

century by the renowned rebel Druse chieftain, the Emir Fakr-ed-Dîn, who held supreme sway over Syria and Palestine from the year 1595 to 1634. He, however, greatly strengthened the city and revived its commerce ; he also built the large and convenient khân near the south-

eastern end of the reef, called (in memory of its occupation by European merchants and factors) the Khân of the Franks. In a corner of this khân there is a Franciscan monastery, famous for its lofty-terraced roof. The port of 'Akka extends one thousand feet from north to south, and seven hundred feet from east to west, but it affords no protection in stormy weather, and ships then seek refuge at the opposite side of the bay in the sheltered haven of Haifa (see page 83), which is formed by a deep curve of the shore at the foot of the headland of Carmel (see page 88).

It was at Haifa that Ibrahim Pasha, stepson of Muhammed Ali, Viceroy of Egypt, and commander of the Egyptian army, caused his artillery and stores to be landed preparatory to his investment of 'Akka in November, 1831. His cavalry and the bulk of his infantry marched through the desert from Egypt, entered Palestine at El Arish, and without opposition took possession of Gaza and Jaffa (see page 129). At the latter place Ibrahim arrived simultaneously from Alexandria, with a large fleet carrying siege material and the remainder of the troops. He landed at Jaffa with his staff and marched northwards up the coast, at the head of his army of between thirty and forty thousand men, and, rounding the promontory of Carmel, approached Haifa. To the great terror of the townspeople, the fleet at the same time steered towards the shore and safely landed the siege material. Ibrahim thence marched onwards to 'Akka, skirting the bay (see page 80), while his squadron proceeded to attack the city by sea, thus enabling the land forces to take up their position before it, under great advantages, on November 27th, 1831.

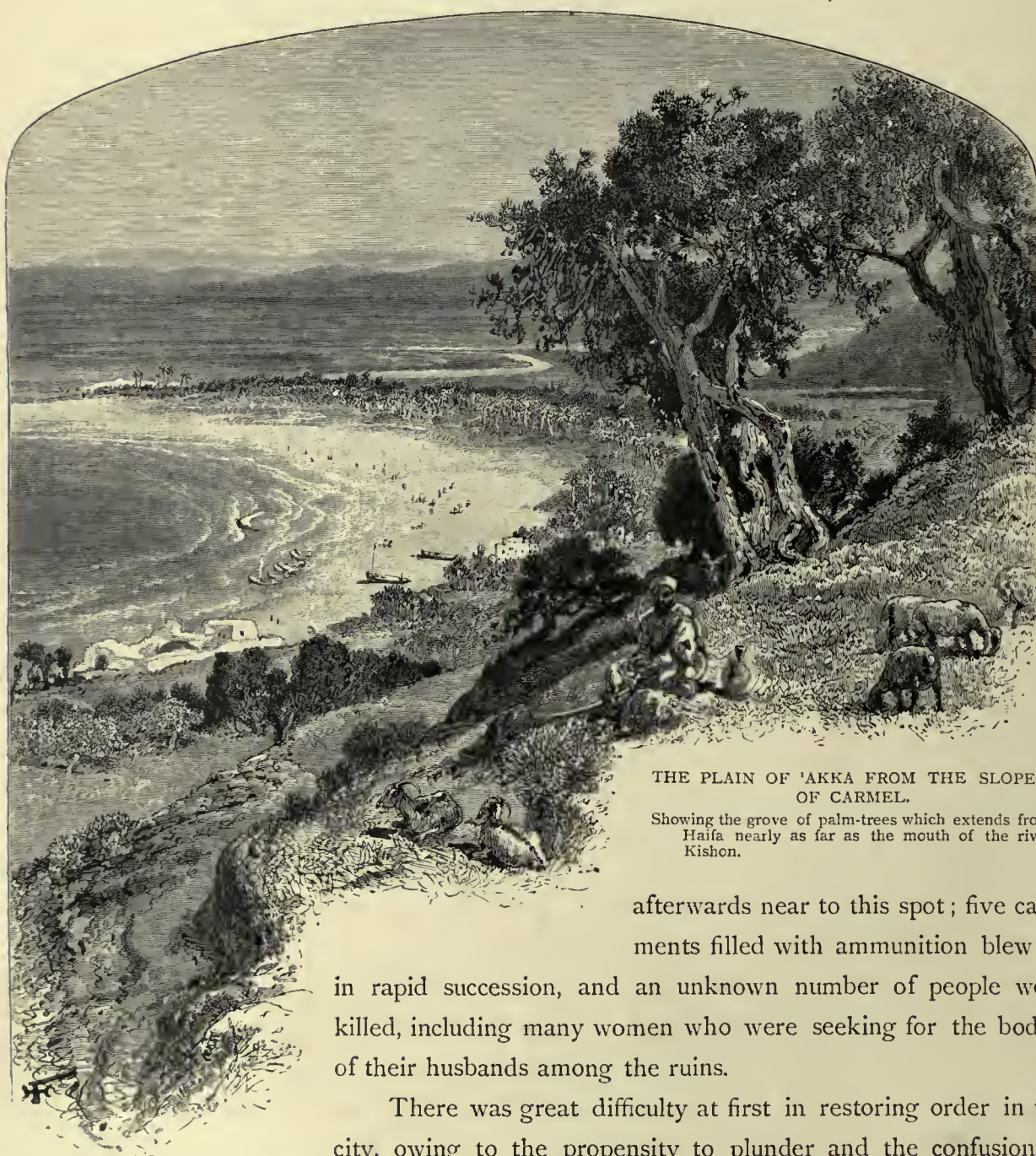
The siege was not, at the onset, scientifically conducted. For more than five months a furious and reckless bombardment was kept up, during which time thirty-five thousand shells were thrown into the heart of the city, causing terrible destruction to life and private property, while comparatively little damage was done to the walls and ramparts. A breach which had been made in February, and assaulted twice unsuccessfully, had been successfully repaired. Muhammed Ali, impatient of delay and of the waste of ammunition without any results, sent Roset, a Neapolitan engineer of great experience, to 'Akka to organize the siege, and fifteen days after his arrival, the place, though defended with great vigour and bravery by Abdallah Pasha, was taken by storm. The final assault was made on May 27th, 1832, soon after daybreak. The conflict continued through all the heat of the day, and it was not until late in the afternoon, when hundreds of men had been killed in the breach, that the city surrendered—exactly six months after the commencement of the siege. The place was given up to pillage, and terrible scenes ensued.

The whole country soon became subject to Muhammed Ali, and 'Akka speedily rose out of its ruins, but as an Egyptian fortress. The public buildings were restored, streets and bazaars rebuilt, a military hospital erected on the site of the Hospice of the Knights of St. John, and the fortifications strengthened until they were deemed almost impregnable. In the meantime all citizens who had survived the siege or who had taken refuge in distant towns were encouraged to re-establish themselves in 'Akka, and a great impetus was given to

trade and commerce. The city was occupied by the élite of the Egyptian army under Colonel Sève (a former aide-de-camp to Marshal Ney), and was kept constantly stored with five years' provisions and abundant ammunition. Ibrahim Pasha caused the long western sea-wall to be almost entirely reconstructed, with stones carried away from the fortress of 'Athlit (see page 100). The scarps of this wall are from thirty to forty feet in height; in its centre stands the Burj el Hadid (the Iron Tower); at the northern end there is another important tower called Burj el Kerim, while Burj Sanjâk (the Flag Tower), also built by Ibrahim with stones from 'Athlit, protects the southern extremity.

But as soon as the city had to all outward appearance recovered from the terrible effects of the siege of the year 1832, it had to undergo another bombardment. The fleets of England, Austria, and Turkey united to expel the Egyptian invaders from Syria and Palestine, just when the people in the district of 'Akka were becoming somewhat reconciled to the rigorous rule of Ibrahim Pasha. But the siege on this occasion, though most disastrous, was of very short duration. The British fleet appeared off 'Akka on the 3rd of November, 1840, and the Egyptian colours were immediately hoisted at the Citadel and the Flag Tower, in defiance. Admiral Stopford directed the operations of the squadron from a steamboat. Commodore Napier, commanding the northern, and Captain Collier the southern division, led their ships close up to the fortress, and took up their positions at two o'clock in the afternoon, under a tremendous fire from the batteries. But the Egyptian artillery officers had not anticipated that the fleet would venture so near to the ramparts, and they fired very much too high. The result was that while the ships poured in their broadsides in a terrific manner, and with great effect, the balls from the fortress flew over their hulls almost harmlessly. There was an uninterrupted roar of guns and the atmosphere was darkened with smoke. At about four o'clock a terrible explosion took place within the fortifications on the land side. The whole of the arsenal and one of the principal magazines, containing five hundred barrels of powder, were blown up, and two entire regiments (consisting of at least sixteen hundred men), who were formed in position on the ramparts above it, were at once annihilated. An unknown number of women and children and animals perished at the same time. Everything within an area of sixty thousand square yards was destroyed, and masses of solid buildings, blown to a great height in the air, descended in a shower of fragments, greatly damaging the fortifications on the land side. This accident naturally hastened the conclusion of the contest. At sunset the firing ceased from the ships and from the batteries; the fleet then retired into deep water. Soon after midnight a boat put off from the shore conveying to the fleet the startling intelligence that the Egyptian troops were hastily quitting 'Akka. An armed force immediately landed and took possession of the city without opposition, and thus it became once more a Turkish fortress. Daylight disclosed a terrible state of devastation—scarcely a dwelling-house in the city had escaped injury. Ordnance stores, however, of every description, and in extraordinary abundance, were found in excellent order; no fortress at that period could have been better provided with munitions of war; but the destruction of life had

been so great in a few hours that this was of no avail to the besieged. The scene of the explosion of the magazine and arsenal is said to have resembled the crater of a volcano; it was a vast hollow, a mile in circumference, lined with smouldering débris and surrounded to a great distance with dead bodies. Unhappily, there was another explosion two days



THE PLAIN OF 'AKKA FROM THE SLOPES
OF CARMEL.

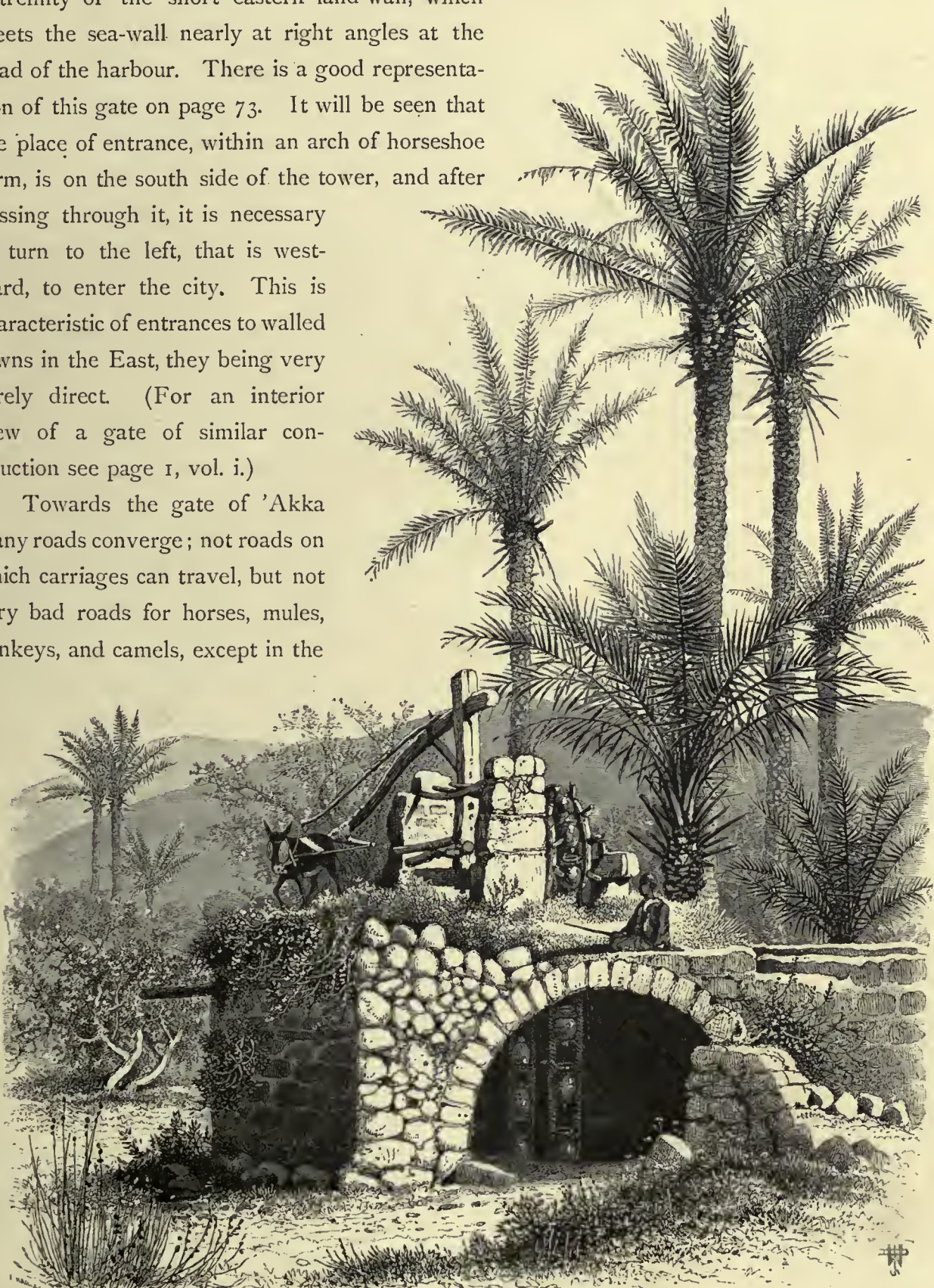
Showing the grove of palm-trees which extends from
Haifa nearly as far as the mouth of the river
Kishon.

afterwards near to this spot; five case-
ments filled with ammunition blew up
in rapid succession, and an unknown number of people were
killed, including many women who were seeking for the bodies
of their husbands among the ruins.

There was great difficulty at first in restoring order in the
city, owing to the propensity to plunder and the confusion of
languages. But authority finally prevailed, and under the
energetic direction of British and Turkish officers the work of reparation commenced, and by
degrees 'Akka once more rose out of its ruins. When Muhammed Ali heard of the loss of
'Akka he sent instructions to Ibrahim Pasha to evacuate the whole of Syria and Palestine
immediately; these provinces were accordingly restored to the Turkish Empire.

The only land entrance to 'Akka is at Burj Kapi (the Gate Tower), near the southern extremity of the short eastern land-wall, which meets the sea-wall nearly at right angles at the head of the harbour. There is a good representation of this gate on page 73. It will be seen that the place of entrance, within an arch of horseshoe form, is on the south side of the tower, and after passing through it, it is necessary to turn to the left, that is westward, to enter the city. This is characteristic of entrances to walled towns in the East, they being very rarely direct. (For an interior view of a gate of similar construction see page 1, vol. i.)

Towards the gate of 'Akka many roads converge; not roads on which carriages can travel, but not very bad roads for horses, mules, donkeys, and camels, except in the



A WELL IN A GARDEN OF HAIFA.

Showing a machine, called a *sakiyeh*, raising water to fill the adjacent tank, on the right.

rainy seasons. There are the old coast roads from the north and south, the much-frequented road from Jenin *viâ* the plain of Esdraelon (see page 20, vol. ii.), the roads from Safed (page 90, vol. ii.) and Sefûriyeh (page 48, vol. ii.), but the road from the great, treeless, corn-producing plain of the Haurân, the chief granary of the whole country, is by far the most important. Wheat in that highly-favoured region yields eightyfold, and barley a hundredfold (see Matthew xiii. 8). Its semi-transparent "hard wheat" is very highly valued and largely exported; and during the season thousands of camel-loads of this grain arrive at 'Akka. The road which unites the Haurân with this city, its natural seaport, must have been much used, if not made, by the Romans. It passes through southern Jaulân, the ancient Gaulanitis, crosses the Jordan south of the Sea of Galilee, and after being joined by an old road from Tiberias (see page 65, vol. ii.), takes an almost direct course to 'Akka. At other seasons this road is traversed occasionally by camels laden with millstones made of basalt, which abounds in the Lejâh (Trachonitis), a rocky region of the Haurân, of volcanic origin, situated to the east of Jaulân (Gaulanitis, see page 102, vol. ii.) and north-east of the great corn-plain above mentioned, which owes its extraordinary fertility to the fact that its soil is composed of basaltic trap in a state of disintegration.

In forming millstones, especially of this extremely hard material, considerable skill is required. The stones for hand-mills are usually from eighteen to twenty-four inches in diameter, but larger ones are made to be worked by wind or water power (see page 8). The upper surface of the nether millstone is slightly convex, and fits into a corresponding concavity in the upper millstone, which is called in Arabic *râkib*, ركب, "the rider," corresponding with the Hebrew *rekeb*, רכב, "chariot." They are each pierced through the centre, and in the hole of the lower stone a strong pivot is fixed, on which the upper millstone "rides." When two women are "grinding together at a mill" they sit opposite to each other, grasping the upright handle fixed near to the edge of the upper stone, and moving it together steadily in a circle, so as to cause the "rider" to rotate regularly. The woman whose right hand is disengaged throws the grain into the cup-like aperture in the centre as required (see page 127, vol. i.). The mill is sometimes fixed in a kind of cement which rises round it in the form of a shallow bowl, and receives the meal as it falls from between the stones. The "nether millstone," to which the heart of "leviathan" is compared in Job xli. 24, is frequently formed of a denser kind of stone than the upper one. The basaltic district of the Haurân furnishes stones of every degree of density, but all of extreme hardness, and mills made from them are so much in demand on account of their great durability, that notwithstanding the expense of transport (a pair of ordinary millstones being a load for a camel), they are sent in great numbers to 'Akka, and thence widely distributed by land and by sea.

Comparatively few camels are possessed by the peasantry of Palestine. At harvest times and for special services they are hired of the Bedawîn who frequent the regions east of the Jordan, and whose chief wealth consists of herds of camels, which are absolutely

necessary to the existence of nomadic tribes. Camels which are used for bearing burdens are called *jemel* (see page 189, vol. i.), and those which are bred and trained for riding *dhelul* (see page 159, vol. i.); the difference between them is as great as that between a race-horse and a cart-horse.

At certain times, for a few days in succession, strings of camels approach 'Akka, carrying baskets of rice from the valley of the Jordan. From nearer districts baggage mules bring bales of cotton, sacks of olives, and jars of oil, or packages of scammony and madder (*alizari*), all in due season; but every day, early in the morning, troops of donkeys and peasants arrive from the neighbouring gardens and villages with fruit and vegetables, eggs and milk, while fishermen land their spoils from the sea; and in fine weather, during the busy season, the scene



THE BAY OF 'AKKA FROM THE SLOPES OF CARMEL.

With the ruined castle of Haifa in the foreground and a glimpse of the town of Haifa at the foot of the castle-hill; in the distance the city of 'Akka is clearly shown.

is further enlivened by little boats hurrying to and fro with merchandise or provisions for ships in the offing.

Al Hariri (1052—1123), the most famous Arabic poet of the Muhammedan era, who flourished during the First Crusade, wrote, in the last of his Assemblies (*Makâmât*), words in praise of a seaport town which are perfectly applicable to 'Akka:—

"This is the pleasant place of meeting, the meeting-place of the ship and the camel, where lizards may watch the leaping sea-fish, where the camel-driver communes with the sailor, and the fisherman astonishes the tiller of the soil with stories of the sea."

'Akka contains, according to a recent estimate, about nine thousand inhabitants, of whom seven thousand five hundred are Muhammedans, including the garrison of Turkish soldiers; the rest, with the exception of a few Jews and Protestants, belong, really or nominally, to the



THE CONVENT OF MOUNT CARMEL.

Its terraced roof commands extensive views along the coast, north and south. The building on the left is used for the accommodation of native pilgrims, and is surmounted by a lighthouse four hundred and seventy feet above the sea.

Latin, the Greek, and the Greek Catholic Churches. Of these the Greek Catholics, who are also called Melchites, and are affiliated to the Latin Church, form by far the largest community. During a residence of several years at Haifa, with my brother Mr. E. T. Rogers, when he was H.B.M. Vice-Consul there, I had frequent opportunities of visiting 'Akka. We could row across the bay in an English boat in an hour and a quarter, or gallop along its sandy shore in two hours and a half (see page 83). There were always kindly greetings

for us in Turkish, Arabic, Greek, Italian, French, or English (somewhat broken English,



THE GROTTO KNOWN AS "THE SCHOOL OF
THE PROPHETS,"

To which pilgrimages are made by Muhammedans, in honour of Elijah. The house on the left is modern, but occupies the site of an ancient chapel. It is opposite the entrance to the cave.

but none the less pleasant to hear) as we crossed the open space within the gate of 'Akka, where there is generally a little crowd assembled during the business hours of the day. Close by is the great corn market, sometimes almost blocked up with its heaps of golden grain, its busy buyers

and sellers, and heavily laden porters. Beyond are the bazaars. The principal one is well-built and substantially roofed, and largely supplied with silks from the looms of Aleppo and Damascus, Manchester cottons printed and plain, glass, cutlery, and crockery ware from Marseilles and Trieste, and jewellery from Constantinople. The smaller bazaars for provisions and more homely merchandise are sheltered with planks and mats or carpets. A very excellent kind of fine matting is made here, to measure, for covering floors of stone or cement. There are many well-built and commodious private houses in 'Akka, some of which (chiefly those occupied by foreigners and native Christians) are furnished in semi-European style, where Eastern and Western customs are agreeably blended. Especially to be remembered is the home of Mr. Girgius Giammal, with its cheerful-looking many-windowed saloon overlooking the sea, in which I have often been kindly welcomed.

In the Muhammedan establishments there are, as a rule, very few Western innovations. The illustration on page 77 gives a good idea of the general appearance of a thoroughly Oriental reception-room in an ordinary house. The bare walls and the small barred windows are especially characteristic. The broad cushioned divan, which occupies three sides of the apartment, serves as a sleeping place by night, the necessary mattresses and quilted coverlets being kept in readiness, in a deep recess concealed by a curtain or in a closet, in the lower part of the room; for in a genuine Eastern home there are no chambers set apart as bedrooms, the roof or any apartment may be used as a sleeping place as occasion requires, and every bed is portable (Mark ii. 11); thus a great number of guests may easily be entertained at the same time.

In the centre of the room dinner and supper are served; the latter is taken at sunset, and is the chief meal of the day. A round tray of tinned copper or of brass, two or three feet in diameter, and more or less enriched with engraved ornament and inscriptions, serves as the dinner table. It is placed on a stool about fifteen inches high, made of wood, and often inlaid with mother-o'-pearl or ivory, like the one in the illustration (on page 77), on which a coffee-pot and coffee-cups are arranged. Of all people of the East it may be said, "except they wash their hands diligently, eat not" (Mark vii. 3). And this is particularly necessary where knives and forks are not used, and each one "dips his hand into the dish" with his neighbour.

When the dinner or supper is ready a servant brings in a large metal basin (*tisht*), with a perforated cover and a raised perforated receptacle for soap in the middle, and places it before the chief or most aged person present, who takes the soap and rubs his hands, while a stream of water is poured gently over them from a long-spouted ewer (*ibrîk*); the water disappears through the pierced cover, so that when the basin is carried to a second person no soiled water is visible. The same process is repeated after a meal. It is an after-dinner washing of hands that is shown in the illustration on page 77. The elder man, who is blind, has already performed the ablution, and is waiting for his nargileh to be lighted, after which coffee will be served.

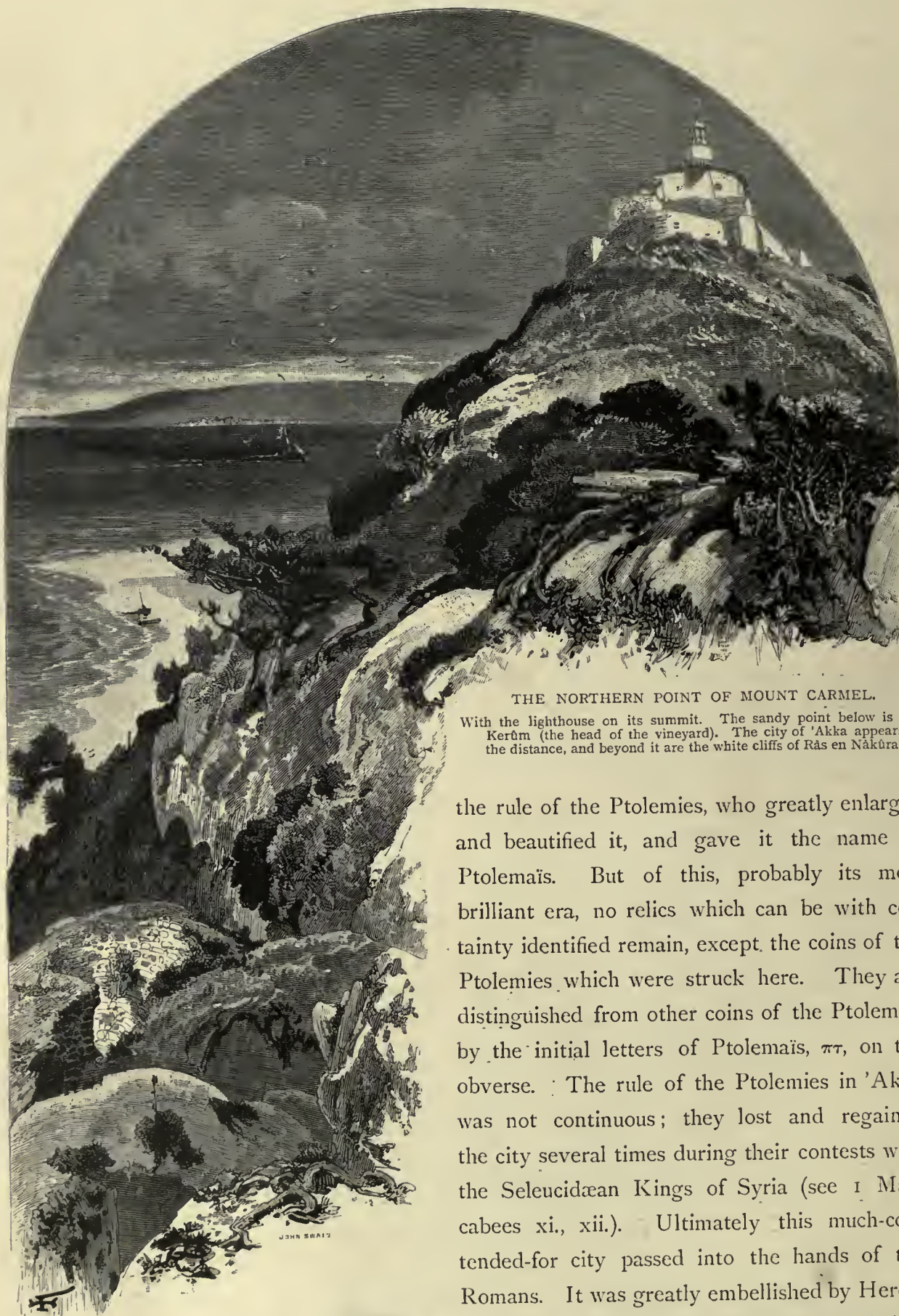
It need hardly be said that no ancient buildings are left standing in 'Akka; the most

important of the modern structures owe their origin to Ahmed Pasha, surnamed Jezzar (the Butcher), who died in 1804, and who has been compared to Herod for his cruelty, as well as for his delight in building. The great khân of Jezzar Pasha occupies the site of a Dominican convent; the galleries surrounding it are supported by ancient columns of red and grey granite, hence it is known as Khân el Amîd (Khân of the Columns). The great mosque of Jezzar Pasha, which has been restored again and again (the present buttressed dome having been erected since 1863), occupies the site of a cathedral. It is formed chiefly of ancient materials, the columns of various coloured marbles and granite having been brought from Cæsarea and Tyre. It is an elaborate but not a beautiful structure. It stands, however, in the centre of a magnificent quadrangular court, planted with cypress and palm trees and flowering shrubs, which shelter some tombs of white marble. This court is surrounded by cloisters supported by ancient columns, and divided into apartments for the accommodation of the mosque attendants and pilgrims. The domed roofs of these retreats may be distinguished in the illustration on page 76. The doves hovering over the great dome and settling upon it are characteristic of the place, for these birds are always safe within the precincts of a mosque, and this gives rise to the Arabic expression, "As safe as a dove in the Haram" (the sacred enclosure).

The ramparts of 'Akka, to which access can only be gained by special permission of the Pasha, form a pleasant and interesting promenade, and though the battered walls bristle with cannons and mortars (among which are some of those which Sir Sydney Smith captured from Napoleon's transport ships), yet the place looked peaceful enough when I last walked there, for many little wild plants were growing out of the crevices, and there were some fine specimens of the acanthus in full blossom.

SKETCH OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF 'AKKA.

It is recorded in Judges i. 31, 32, that the tribe of Asher, to whom the city of Accho, אַכּוֹ ('Akka) was assigned, did not succeed in driving out its inhabitants, "the Canaanites," but "dwelt among them." The fragments of buildings which have been found here, formed of small and highly sun-dried bricks with a mixture of cement and sand, characteristic of structures of the remotest ages, may be regarded as relics of this period. No further mention is made of Accho in the Old Testament, but it is occasionally alluded to by classic authors as Ake, a city of Phœnicia, and mention is made of it by Menander as having yielded to Assyria when Tyre was attacked by Shalmanasar. Akkon is its Assyrian name. That this city was a place of importance when Alexander the Great, B.C. 333, wrested Syria, Palestine, and Egypt from Persian rule, is proved by the existence of numerous very fine gold and silver coins of the Macedonian monarch struck at 'Akka. When Alexander's vast dominions were divided among his generals, who were his successors, Egypt fell to the share of Ptolemy, who subsequently acquired 'Akka, B.C. 320. For a long period the city was under



THE NORTHERN POINT OF MOUNT CARMEL.

With the lighthouse on its summit. The sandy point below is Râs Kerûm (the head of the vineyard). The city of 'Akka appears in the distance, and beyond it are the white cliffs of Râs en Nakurah.

the rule of the Ptolemies, who greatly enlarged and beautified it, and gave it the name of Ptolemaïs. But of this, probably its most brilliant era, no relics which can be with certainty identified remain, except the coins of the Ptolemies which were struck here. They are distinguished from other coins of the Ptolemies by the initial letters of Ptolemaïs, $\pi\tau$, on the obverse. The rule of the Ptolemies in 'Akka was not continuous; they lost and regained the city several times during their contests with the Seleucidæan Kings of Syria (see 1 Maccabees xi., xii.). Ultimately this much-contended-for city passed into the hands of the Romans. It was greatly embellished by Herod, though it was not actually within his jurisdiction,

and when Paul abode there one day (Acts xxi. 7) on his way from Tyre (see pages 55, 56,



EL MAHRAKAH, THE PLACE OF
ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE.

At the south-eastern point of the range of Carmel. In the foreground is the green knoll called Tell el Kassis (the Hill of the Priests), close to which the Kishon flows.

and 59) to Cæsarea (see page 108), it had already been raised to the rank of a Roman colony, and must have been a splendid city. The imperial coinage of Ptolemais extends from the reign of Claudius to the time of Salonina (A.D. 41 to A.D. 268). The obverse bears the head and titles of the sovereign. The inscription of the reverse is generally COL PTOL. The most striking reverse types are on the coins of Trajan and Hadrian—a female figure wearing a mural crown (the genius of

the city) seated on a rock, at her feet a river (the Belus), and in her right hand ears of wheat; and on coins of Caracalla—a hexastyle temple in which Fortune stands crowned by Victory, who is placed on a column beside her. At an early period this city became an episcopal see. Clarus, Bishop of Ptolemaïs, attended the Council of Cæsarea A.D. 198 (see page 108).

In A.D. 638 the Muhammedans took possession of Ptolemaïs, and its Semitic name of Accho, which had evidently been cherished by tradition, was immediately revived under the form of 'Akka.

The next great change was the conquest of the city by the Crusaders under Baldwin I. A.D. 1104, when it became their chief stronghold and landing-place. The Venetians, Genoese, and Pisans, whose fleets continually conveyed pilgrims and Crusaders, stores and merchandise to the port of 'Akka, had special quarters assigned to them for trade, and the place rapidly grew in importance; yet it surrendered to Salah-ed-din (Saladin) without resistance, A.D. 1187, after his decisive victory at Hattin. (For a view of Hattin see page 58, and for a description of the battle of Hattin see pages 63 and 64, vol. ii.) 'Akka was regained by the Crusaders in 1191, after a long siege, by the timely arrival of Richard Plantagenet and Philip Augustus with fresh forces. The city remained in their possession for exactly one hundred years, during which time many splendid buildings, churches, palaces, monasteries, and aqueducts were erected. It became the head-quarters of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and acquired its European name of St. Jean d'Acre.

The coinage of the Crusaders is very interesting, but there is one series of coins so remarkable as to be worthy of special notice here.

To facilitate dealings with the Arabs, the Venetians, who may be regarded as the money farmers of the Crusaders, struck from time to time, at Tripoli (see page 9), 'Akka, and Jerusalem, gold coins in imitation, more or less exact, of the dinars of the khalifs. On these coins the name and titles of one of the khalifs appeared on the obverse, and on the reverse the declaration of the Muhammedan faith, in Arabic in the Cufic character. This practice continued for a long period, and the fabricated coins passed current throughout the country. When Eudes de Châteauroux, the Legate of Pope Innocent IV., arrived at Acre with Louis IX., he was enraged to find that coins, the legends of which declared that Muhammed was the Apostle of God, were struck and issued under the auspices of the Crusaders. Excommunication was pronounced against "the evil-doers" and ratified by the Pope. But the want of gold coinage was such a serious inconvenience that the Venetians of 'Akka resorted to a subterfuge to get over the difficulty. They once more imitated the coins of the khalifs, but substituted Christian legends for the Muhammedan ones. For instance, one example has on the obverse within a circle (where the name of a khalif ought to appear) the words, "The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, One God," and in the margin, "Struck at 'Akka in the year 1251 of the incarnation of the Messiah." On the reverse, "We glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, by whom we have our salvation, our

life, our resurrection, and by whom we have been delivered and pardoned." Another coin dated as above has within the square of the obverse, "One God, one faith, one baptism," with a small cross in the centre, and on the reverse a declaration of trinity in unity, with the words, "Glory to God from age to age, Amen," in the segments of the circle.

Christian rule in Palestine came to an end in A.D. 1291, when the Egyptian sultan, Melek-el-Ashrâf Khalîl, son of Kâlaoun, took the city of 'Akka by storm, after a siege of one month. He gave orders for the demolition of its walls and churches; but a gateway of one of its churches was preserved and carried to Cairo (El Kahîreh) as a trophy of victory. El Makrizi, the celebrated Arab historian (refer to page 238, vol. ii.) relates the circumstance, and speaks with enthusiasm of the beauty of this gate, saying, "It is one of the most admirable that the hands of man have made, for it is of white marble, novel in style, surpassing in workmanship, its bases and jambs and columns all conjoined (clustered), and the whole was conveyed to Al Kahîreh." It forms the entrance to the mosque tomb of Melek-en-Nasr Muhammed, brother and successor (1293—1341) of the above Melek-el-Ashrâf Khalîl (1290—1293), in the Sûk en Nahhasîn, one of the main thoroughfares of Cairo; and it often puzzles travellers who do not know its history. This gateway is especially interesting, being the only perfect relic now left of the numerous churches built by the Crusaders at 'Akka.

A traveller in Palestine in the middle of the fourteenth century (Ludolf de Suchem) describes 'Akka as empty and desolate, but he says that its churches, towers, and palaces were not then so completely destroyed as to have rendered their restoration impossible. About sixty Saracens were left to guard the place and port. They supported themselves by the culture of silk and the sale of doves and partridges which swarmed there. The city was still in ruins when it passed into the possession of Selim I., the Sultan of Turkey, A.D. 1517, and it did not begin to revive until the seventeenth century. The only remains of Crusading work now distinguishable are the subterranean magazines beneath the modern military hospital, a range of immense vaults under the ramparts, traces of the churches of St. Andrew and of St. John, and portions of the city wall.

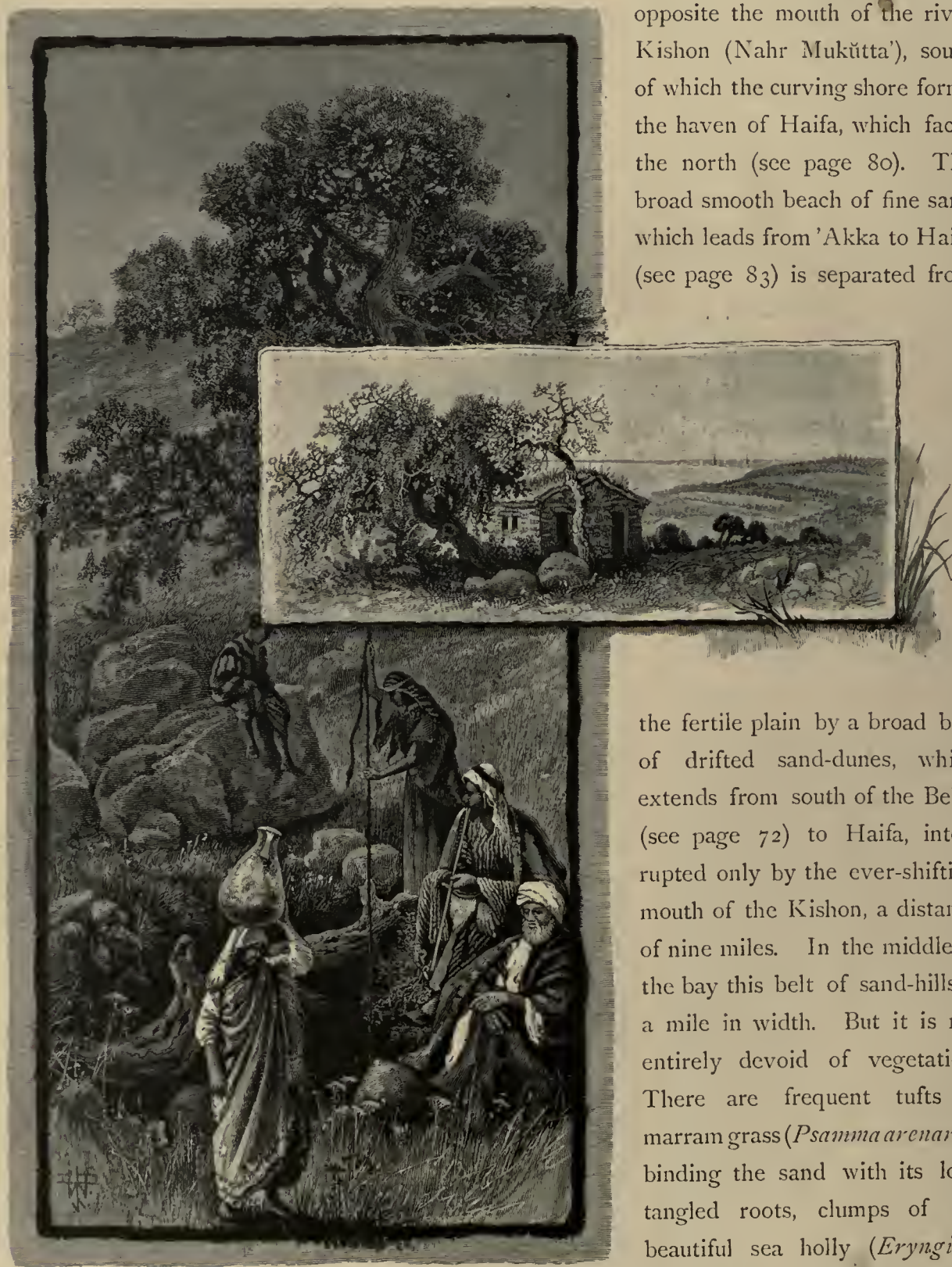
About one mile due east of 'Akka stands the "Mount Turon" of the Crusaders, where Richard Cœur de Lion encamped in 1191, and where, in 1799, Napoleon planted his batteries in vain. It is an isolated and apparently artificial mount, ninety-six feet in height, completely dominating the city of 'Akka and overlooking the plain. The Arabic name of this hill is Tell el Fokhâr, "the hill of potter's clay," but it is sometimes called Napoleon's Mount, and is also known as the Mount of *Antikâr*, the name given to King Richard in the numerous Arabian chronicles of the Crusades.

MOUNT CARMEL AND THE RIVER KISHON.

The distance, in a straight line, from the promontory of 'Akka to the headland of Carmel (Râs Kerûm, literally "the head of the vineyard") is eight miles (see page 88). Between these

two points the coast recedes considerably, and the distance along the shore is more than twelve miles. The bay thus formed widens towards the south, measuring not more than a mile near

to 'Akka, but at least three miles opposite the mouth of the river Kishon (Nahr Mukütta'), south of which the curving shore forms the haven of Haifa, which faces the north (see page 80). The broad smooth beach of fine sand which leads from 'Akka to Haifa (see page 83) is separated from



WELL AT THE PLACE OF ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE, AND A VIEW FROM THE HEIGHTS ABOVE IT,

Embracing a long line of the coast of the plain of 'Athlit, with a strip of blue sea beyond.

the fertile plain by a broad belt of drifted sand-dunes, which extends from south of the Belus (see page 72) to Haifa, interrupted only by the ever-shifting mouth of the Kishon, a distance of nine miles. In the middle of the bay this belt of sand-hills is a mile in width. But it is not entirely devoid of vegetation. There are frequent tufts of marram grass (*Psamma arenaria*) binding the sand with its long tangled roots, clumps of the beautiful sea holly (*Eryngium maritimum*), and broad patches of alkali (saltwort), interspersed

here and there with half-buried shrubs, stunted trees, and thickets of tamarisks ; while south of the Kishon, the narrowing sand-ridge is crowned with palm-trees (*Phoenix dactylifera*), which form an extensive grove, the chief glory of Haifa, and one of the most picturesque places in Palestine (see page 80 and the

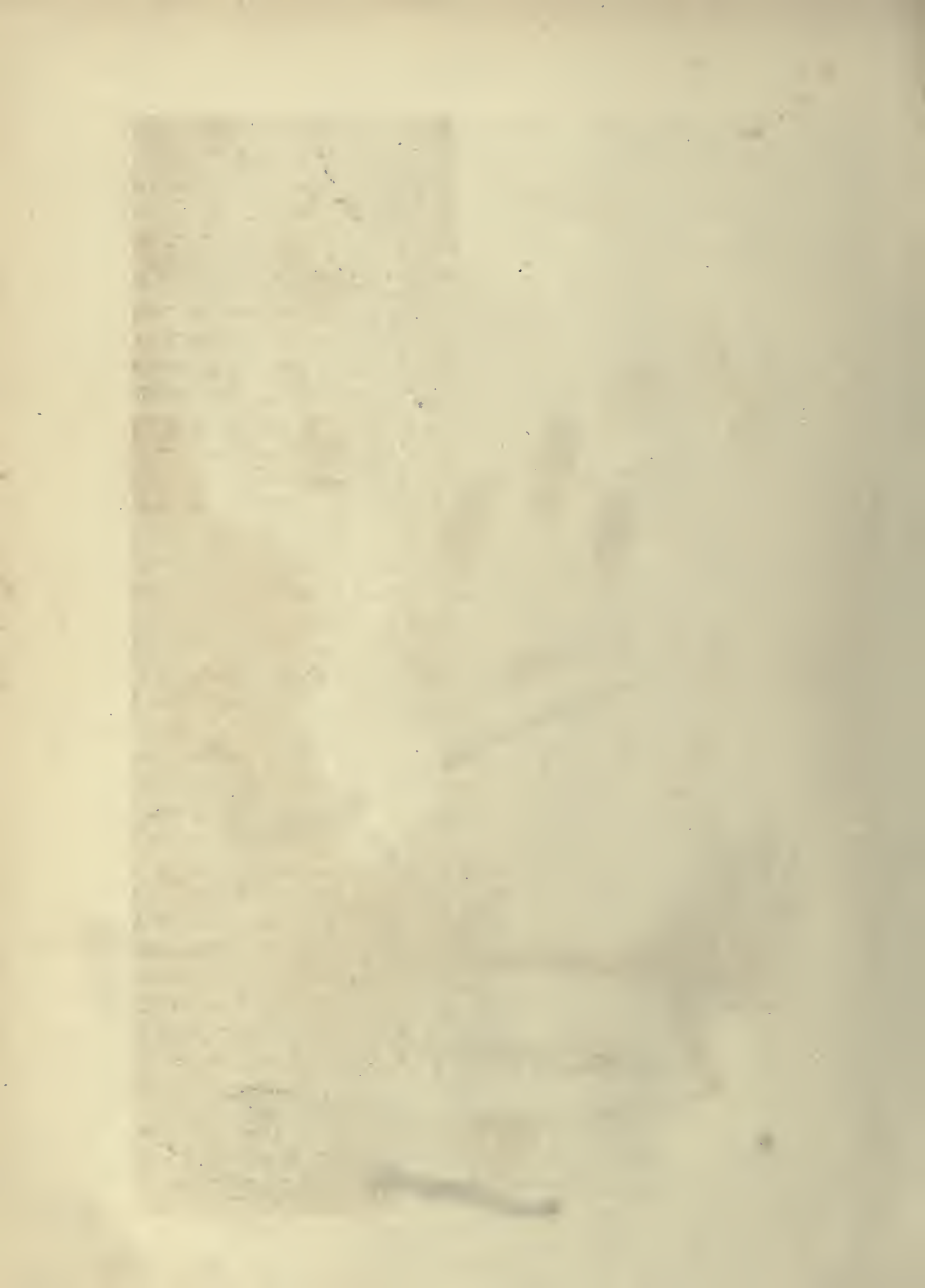


THE RIVER KISHON FROM EL MAHRAKAH,
The place of Elijah's sacrifice. A Bedawin encampment in the foreground, and the hills of Galilee in the distance beyond a forest of oak-trees.

steel plate entitled "Mount Carmel"). Within the sand-dunes north of the Kishon the plain extends eastward for four miles to the foot of the hills, where there are numerous villages surrounded by olive-groves. The plain is in many parts well cultivated, and yields cotton and

tobacco, good crops of wheat and barley, and vegetables of many kinds; liquorice grows wild. The marshes by the river Belus (Nahr Na'mân), and near the fountain of Jidru, are in the spring-time bright with blossoming reeds and rushes, and the blue and yellow iris springs up at the edge of every little pool of water (see Job viii. 11); while large expanses of firm ground bordering the marsh-land are carpeted as early as February with anemones—scarlet, crimson, white, blue, purple, pink, and lilac—with patches of clover and mallow here and there, and golden buttercups. Meadow grass grows quickly here, after the winter rains, to the height of two feet or more, and it is curious to see the frail speedwell and pimpernel, with long pale stems, struggling upwards through it towards the light. But this grass of rapid growth quickly falls while yet green, and there is no attempt at haymaking (see Job viii. 12). Many horses, however, are sent here from Haifa to graze during this short season of plentiful pasturage.

The gardens of Haifa are pleasantly situated between the palm-grove above mentioned and the slopes of Carmel (see page 80), and extend from near the east gate of the town to Wâdy Selmân, whose winding channels and large lagoon are fringed with oleasters and sea lavender, and haunted by egrets, herons, and kingfishers. My brother's garden was about a mile and a half from Haifa, and just opposite Wâdy Rashmia. It produced fruit and vegetables of many kinds, but it was most famous for its large white mulberry tree, and we often rode there to spend the hour before sunset with a few friends, when its fruit was ripe, resting on mats in its shade, or on the broad stone parapet of the raised pool close by. There were a few rose-bushes and carnations round the rustic dwelling of the gardener and his two wives, who seemed to live very amicably together, although the first wife was an Arab woman, no longer young, and the second was an Egyptian girl whom he had avowedly married because he required an extra assistant, and knew that she was clever at gardening, especially in the cultivation of tomatoes, the bâmieh (*Hibiscus esculentus*), and the purple egg-plant (*Meloenia badinjan*). But the illustration on page 81 reminds me of another garden, the first I visited at Haifa. It was close to the east gate of the town. We made our way, one pleasant afternoon in October, down a short narrow lane of prickly pears (*Cactus opuntia*), and soon came to a little mud-and-stone hut, the dwelling-place of the gardener and his family. They were all Egyptians (who are generally considered more skilful than the Arabs in the cultivation of the ground, but they are content with more clumsy machinery). Fig-trees, olives, pomegranates, almonds, oranges and lemons, and large beds of cucumbers flourished under their care, and a few date-palm trees embellished the enclosure; the fruit hangs in golden clusters from these trees year after year, but it does not arrive at perfection in Palestine. A pleasant sound of falling water attracted us towards a rudely built stone reservoir, round which were seated a company of fezzed and turbaned Arabs smoking, chatting, and eating the long rough-skinned but juicy cucumbers for which this garden was especially famous. Water was falling with considerable force into the reservoir from a duct supplied by a series of earthenware jars attached to ropes made of palm fibre, which revolved round a vertical cog-wheel, moved by means of a horizontal wheel also clogged, which was

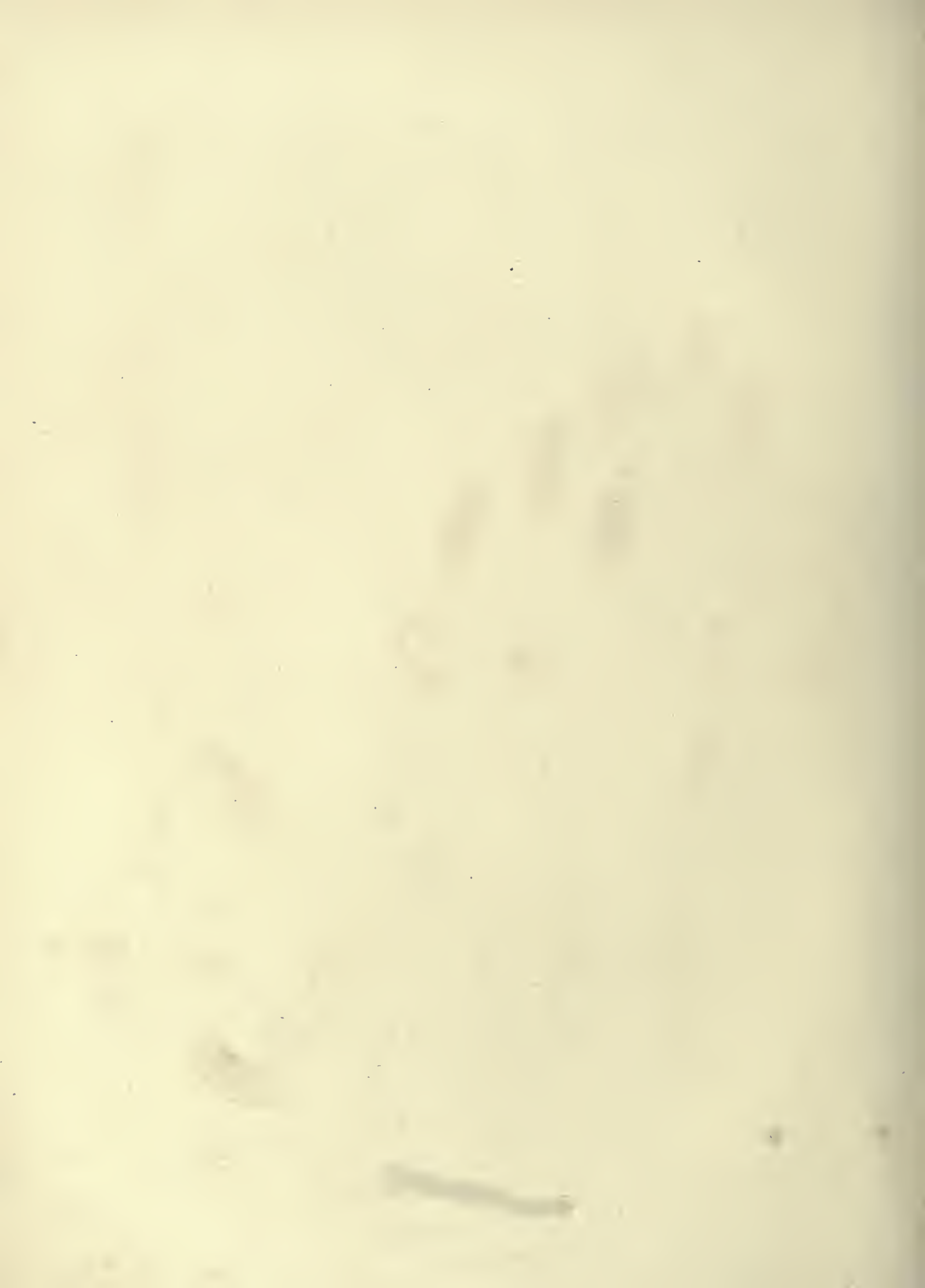




J. D. WOODWARD PINX.

E. BRANDARD SCULPT.

MOUNT CARMEL.



kept in motion by a blindfolded mule. As the creaking wheel turned round, the jars dipped into the well and were filled with water, and as soon as they reached the top of the wheel they emptied themselves into the trough, and so on again and again as long as the mule kept up his monotonous round, urged on by a little barefooted boy, stick in hand (see page 81). (This machine is called a *sâkiyeh*; it is said to be of Persian origin and is much used in Egypt.) A hole in the lower part of the wall of the reservoir was every day unplugged for a certain time, and the water allowed to flow into the little furrows or channels which intersected the beds of vegetables and encircled the trees (see page 46, vol. ii.).

The town of Haifa occupies a space in the form of a parallelogram on a gently rising slope close to the seashore, and is protected by well-built stone walls. It has two embattled gates, one at each end of the main thoroughfare, which is parallel with the shore, and has an open space in the middle where camels and their drivers often bivouac by lantern or moonlight. The houses are very irregularly distributed, and with few exceptions have flat roofs, on which the grass grows freely after the winter rains. Those occupied by consuls, foreign merchants, and the wealthier of the townspeople are large substantial two-storied structures, some of which have central verandahed courts paved with marble. The ground-floor premises are generally used for stabling or stores. The town is rapidly rising in importance, and its markets and bazaars are well supplied. Many houses have recently been erected outside the walls. When I first arrived in Haifa in 1855 there were no suburban dwellings except the huts of the gardeners, and the population was not much more than two thousand; but according to a recent estimate it contains five thousand inhabitants, of whom more than half are Christians of various communities. The remainder are Muhammedans and a considerable number of Jews. Immediately behind the town rises a steep hill, a spur from Mount Carmel, dotted with olive and terebinth trees and crowned by a small castle called Burj Haifa, in which English cannon balls of 1840 are embedded (see steel plate "Mount Carmel," and page 83). Although both town and castle have a somewhat venerable appearance they are quite modern, and only date from 1761.

The old historic Haifa which was taken by the Crusaders in the year 1100, regained by the troops of Saladin in 1190, and retaken and refortified by Louis IX., was a mile and a half north-west of the present town, and extended nearly as far as Râs Kerûm (see page 88). It was called by its Christian conquerors the "Seigneurie de Caiphas," and among its successive rulers were Tancred, afterwards Regent of Antioch, and Rorgius, who had previously been "Lord of Hebron." But the city was lost to the Crusaders, and almost destroyed by the Muhammedans, at the end of the thirteenth century. It still existed, however, in 1761, when Sheikh Dhâher-el-'Amer was ruler of Central Palestine (refer to page 76); but he found it so dangerously exposed to the incursions of nomadic tribes from the plains of Athlît (see page 92), that he determined that it should be entirely abandoned. Having bombarded the place, he used its stones to build the walls of the new town. He also constructed the serai and the castle (see page 83). The people of Haifa by degrees built



THE PLAINS OF ESDRAELON FROM THE HEIGHTS ABOVE EL MAHRAKAH, LOOKING TOWARDS THE SOUTH-EAST.

In the distance, in a central position, the village of Zerlin (Jezreel), with its white castle, is easily distinguished. On the left rises Jebel Duhy (Little Hermon), and on the right are the Mountains of Gilboa.

their new homes from the ruins of their old ones, and for more than a century the site of the old city, now called Haifa el 'Atikah, served as a quarry of ready-dressed stones. It is at the present time almost covered with gardens and drifting sand-hills, but foundations of walls, broken columns, and large portions of tessellated pavement are sometimes exposed, while the shingly beach below is strewn with fragments of granite porphyry, rosso antico, and serpentine marble. The ruins of a tower stand on the shore and are washed by the sea. "Hidden treasures" of more or less value have been found occasionally among the ruins. The most important discovery was made about thirty years ago, when a workman digging for dressed stones found a jar containing one thousand gold coins of a period anterior to Muhammedan rule in Palestine.

Nearly midway between the new town and these ruins (just where the strip of land between the slopes of Carmel and the shore widens out into a plain rather more than half a mile in width) a small colony of German Templists, chiefly of the agricultural and artisan class, established themselves several years ago. Some of them have lived

in America and can speak English. They numbered in 1877 about three hundred and fifty individuals. Their village consists of a long straight street running up from the sea to the foot of the hills. Two parallel streets have been laid out. The houses, some of which have sloping red-tiled roofs, are built of white limestone, or of reddish grit, quarried



THE RIVER KISHON.

As it appears after the rainy season, where it flows through the narrow pass called Wady el Kasab (Valley of Reeds), which leads from the great plain of Esdraelon to the plain of 'Akka. Oleanders flourish here, and many small birds build their nests.

in the mountains close by. Each dwelling-house stands in its own garden, and has a well and a cistern for rain-water. The street is planted with an avenue of mulberry, sycamore, and other trees, and the hill just above it has been newly terraced and planted with vines by the colonists. (It can be traced in the distance in the steel plate, "Mount Carmel.") They

have a chapel and a college, where several languages, including Arabic, are taught, and a library and reading-room. At the lower end of the street there is an hotel of simple character, which is greatly praised by travellers for its cleanliness. Near it stands a guard-house for the use of the nightly patrol.

Beyond the colony the plain extends towards the north-west to the headland of Carmel, a distance of a mile and a quarter, with an average breadth of half or three-quarters of a mile, and an area of about six hundred acres of good arable land, all now under cultivation, half of it being owned or rented by the Germans, and the rest by Arabs. Olive-groves (a few groups of which belong to the colonists) skirt the base of the hills, and the sandy seashore is fringed with fig orchards and hedges of *Cactus opuntia* (prickly pear). The colonists have made a carriage road from Haifa to Nazareth, and there is a carriage-maker among them. They have also a soap manufactory, which is beginning to do a good trade with America. Every family has a cow or two and a few goats, which an Arab is employed to collect and take out to pasture every day. They are not rich, but they have enough for their actual needs, and seem to be happy. They live peaceably with the people of the country, but apparently do not desire to fraternise with them.*

Near to the rocky shore at the foot of the western extremity of Mount Carmel, where the plain is not more than two hundred yards in width (its narrowest part), there is a mound of ruins called Tell es Semâk, and a ruined fortress, evidently built to guard the pass. This probably was the site of Sycaminum, a city which Strabo, who died A.D. 24, describes as existing only in name in his time, but which must have been of considerable importance a century earlier, for large and beautiful gold coins of Cleopatra, the thrice-married daughter of Ptolemy VI., surnamed Philometer, were struck at Sycamina in the year of the Seleucidæ 187 = B.C. 125. (The strange story of her life is graphically told in 1 Maccabees x. xi.)

Josephus relates that when Ptolemy VIII., surnamed Lathyrus, came from Cyprus with an army of thirty thousand men to besiege Ptolemaïs ('Akka), "he came to the country of Sycamine, and there set his army ashore." Wherever the *city* may have stood, "the country of Sycamine" must have included the shores of the haven within the northern headland of Carmel, the haven of Zebulun. "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships" (Gen. xlix. 13; see page 83). הַנָּחַל, the Hebrew word for haven, is echoed, with a slight variation, and perpetuated in the Arabic name of the town of Haifa, حيفا, and the Greek Ἡφά.

Eusebius, who died in A.D. 338, speaks of a village of Sycaminum, "also called Ἡφά," and this seems to indicate that the new Sycaminum was built in the "haven," probably on the site

* The sect of "Temple Christians," called also "Lovers of Jerusalem," had its origin in a little village of Würtemberg, in the year 1851. A few piously-disposed individuals united themselves into a society for the promotion of spiritual life. Their numbers quickly increased, and in 1853 they started a newspaper; Christopher Hoffmann, its editor, was elected president of the community. One of their chief aspirations was to help to restore fertility to the land once "flowing with milk and honey." Accordingly, in the year 1868, they sent pioneers to Palestine to select suitable places for colonisation. Plots of land were purchased at Haifa and at Jaffa, and the first company of colonists arrived in the autumn of that year. A colony was subsequently established in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

now called Haifa el 'Atikah (see map). In the Talmud reference is made to חַיפָּה, *Haifha* and *Shikmonah*.

Mount Carmel is called in Arabic Jebel Mâr Elyas (the mountain of Saint Elijah), and from time immemorial it has been regarded as a sacred place, "the Mount of God." In the time of Tacitus an altar to the "God of Carmel" is said still to have stood upon the mount, but without temple or ornament, and upon this altar Vespasian sacrificed and consulted the oracle as to his future fortunes.

The grottoes and caves of Mount Carmel were at a very early period used as places of retreat by holy men and sages, and it is recorded that even Pythagoras retired here for study and meditation. Prophets and philosophers were succeeded by Christian recluses, and a regular order of "hermits of Mount Carmel" was instituted in the year 400, by Jean, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in honour of the Prophet Elijah. (Some of the stories and fables which were related to me by people of Haifa were attributed to a hermit of Mount Carmel.) From these hermits naturally sprang the monastic order of the Carmelites, which was organized early in the thirteenth century. Under the protection of the Crusaders they built a monastery, which was visited by Louis IX. in 1252. Edward I. of England was enrolled in this order, and one of its most famous generals was an Englishman, Simon Stock or Stoke, of Kent, who for sixteen years lived in a grotto, which is now enclosed in a chapel on the slope of Carmel just below the lighthouse (see page 88). His memory is greatly revered; he died in 1265.

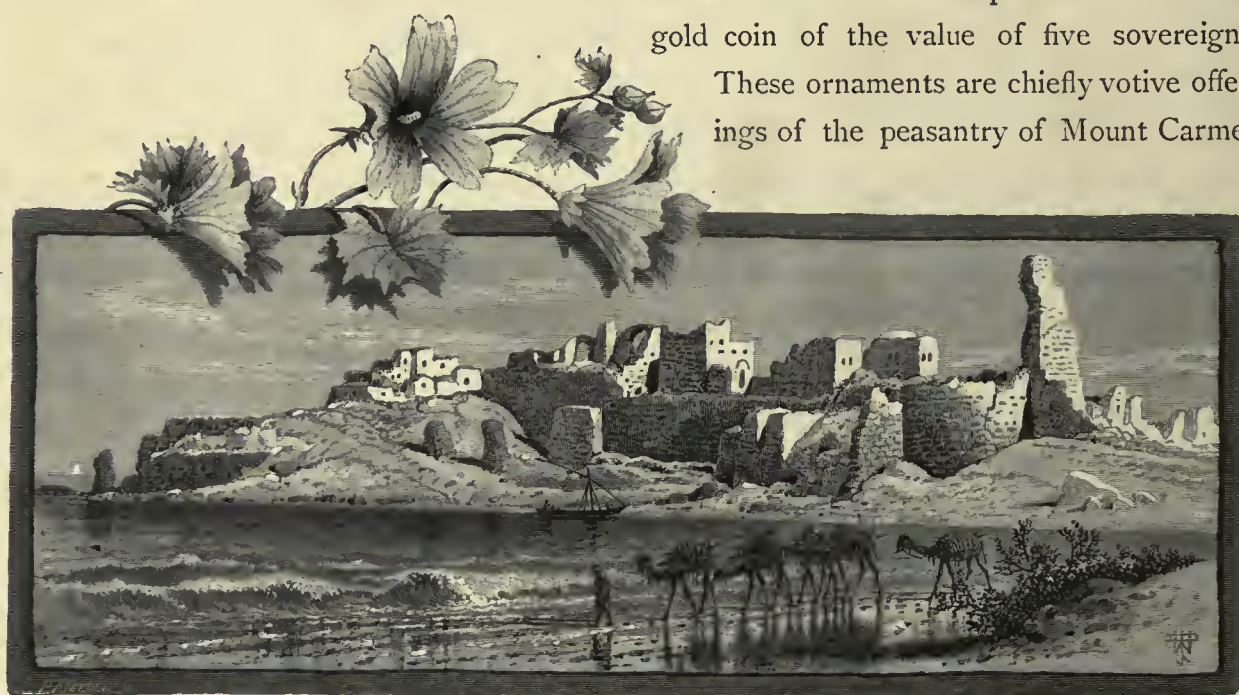
In 1291, when the Crusaders finally lost their possessions in Palestine, the monastery (which was on the site of the present building, shown on page 84) was attacked and plundered, and many of its inmates were murdered. The place was deserted and remained in ruins for a long period. The grotto known as "the School of the Prophets," at the foot of Mount Carmel (see page 85), was, after a long interval, purchased and tenanted for a time by a small company of Carmelites. A little chapel was built close to it by Fra Prospero, but in 1635 the monks were massacred by the Muhammedans, who took possession of the place and have held it ever since. They regard it with great reverence, and keep lamps constantly burning there in honour of Elijah, and it is visited by a great number of pilgrims of divers creeds every year. The grotto, which is partly artificial, is twenty-eight by twenty-one feet square, and eighteen feet in height. I once saw a rudely carved and painted wooden cradle here, and was told that it had been brought by a young mother who had lost two children successively in infancy, and who desired a blessing and protection for her newly-born child, an infant son. A small house, built only a few years ago, stands opposite the entrance to the grotto, where the ruins of the chapel of Fra Prospero could formerly be traced. A palm-tree grows within the enclosed court of this sanctuary (see page 85).

The monastery which Napoleon visited in 1799, and which was used as a hospital for his wounded soldiers after his unsuccessful siege of 'Akka, was destroyed in 1821 by Abdallah Pasha.

The present monastery or "Convent of Mount Carmel" (see page 84), though dedicated 'in honorem B. B. Virginis Mariæ,' is commonly called Deir Mâr Elyas (the Convent of Saint Elijah). It owes its origin to the indefatigable exertions of one monk, Fra Giovanni Battista di Frascati, who collected the money for its erection. Its first stone was laid in 1828. It is very substantially built; the north side is protected by a ditch; the bastion on the east side, plainly shown in the illustration, is formed by the apse of the chapel which is built over the so-called grotto of Elijah. On a side altar of this chapel there is a large statue of the prophet carved in wood, adorned with silver bracelets, anklets, and necklets, and a silver

chain from which is suspended an Austrian gold coin of the value of five sovereigns.

These ornaments are chiefly votive offerings of the peasantry of Mount Carmel,



ATHLÎT, FROM THE SOUTH.

Called Castellum Peregrinorum by Mediaeval writers. It was one of the most important landing-places for pilgrims during the thirteenth century. It stands on a rocky promontory which projects a quarter of a mile westward into the sea.

including the Druses. There are generally from eighteen to twenty monks in residence, one of whom must be a qualified surgeon. A most hospitable and courteous welcome is always given to European travellers, for whom twenty-eight beds in the handsome suite of rooms on the first floor are always kept in readiness. Native pilgrims are accommodated on the ground-floor and in the building surmounted by a lighthouse west of the convent (see page 84). The monks diligently cultivate a garden of flowers and vegetables, and the vine flourishes under their care. From the abundant aromatic herbs of Carmel they distil fragrant essences and very valuable medicaments. They possess about three hundred goats and twenty cows, and employ native herdsmen to lead them to pasture. There are several small chapels south and east of the convent, called "Rumitorii;" in one of them there is a statue of John the Baptist, carved in wood.

About two miles due south of the convent, on a level space half-way up a picturesque winding valley called Wâdy es Siyeh, السيح, on the western slope of Mount Carmel, there is a ruin known as Ed Deir (the Convent). It is close to a copious fountain, "Ain es Siyeh" (the



RUINS ON THE WEST SIDE OF ATHLÎT.

The fortress was built by the Templars in the year 1218, and was the last place held by the Crusaders in Palestine. It was taken by the Sultan Melek el Ashraf el Khalîl after his conquest of Acre in 1291.

Pilgrim's Spring), and near to a large and partly artificial cave, which, according to a very ancient tradition, was a favourite retreat of Elijah, and is regarded as a sacred "place" (*mukâm*) by the Muhammedans (refer to page 3, vol. ii.). The ruin, Ed Deir, probably marks the site of the convent said to have been built by Brocardus (the second general of the order of the Carmelites) "at the fountain of Elijah." It had but a brief existence, for it was pillaged and its inmates were massacred in the year 1238. The Carmelites did not re-occupy this site, and the building gradually fell to decay.

Higher up in the valley there is a place called "Elijah's Garden," where hollow stones the geodes of geologists), called locally "petrified fruits," are found. The very large ones, which are now rare, resemble water melons in form and size; smaller ones, which are regarded as apples, are more common. These hollow stones are composed of a pale-coloured flint, with a thin coating of lime, the surface of which is of a tawny tint; the interior is lined with quartz or chalcedony, and some of the specimens are exceedingly beautiful. In addition to these there are small stones which are not unlike olives in shape and size; they are known as *Lapidis Judaici*, and are said to be the fossil spines of a species of echinus (*Cidaris glandifera*). The existence of these stony fruits is accounted for by an ancient legend, of which I have heard many versions; but it was related to me as follows, on the spot, in the year 1858, when I spent a whole day in the valley with my brother and a large party of Haifa friends:—"In the days of Elijah (Mar Elyas), a certain man possessed a large garden in this valley. His fruit-trees flourished exceedingly, and his water-melons were renowned for their size and flavour. One day Elijah passed by this garden, and he saw its owner gathering melons, and there was a great heap of them upon the ground; and Elijah said, 'O friend! give me of the fruit of your garden, out of your abundance a little fruit to quench my thirst!' And the man answered, 'O my Lord! this is not fruit that you see; these are but heaps of stones!' And Elijah replied, 'Be it so!' And immediately all the fruit of the garden, the gathered and the ungathered, was turned to stone!" *

A pilgrimage to this place is very pleasant in the early spring-time, when the valley is bright with blossoming shrubs, and the cyclamen and narcissus, and many other wild flowers, spring up luxuriantly among the thorns. To give some idea of the wildness of this valley I may mention that, in addition to some specimens of fruits from the Garden of Elijah, I have a broken tusk of a wild boar, a beautifully formed horn of a gazelle, and the claw of a leopard or cheetah, all of which were found there on the same day.

The corresponding valley on the other side of the ridge or watershed of Mount Carmel is a tributary of Wâdy Rashmîa, a beautiful valley which runs towards the north, and falls into the Nahr Matneh about one mile east of the town of Haifa (see page 80). The terraced hills of Rashmîa (see map) were formerly planted with vines and olives, but they are now overgrown with thorns and brushwood and tall thistles. In a commanding position, seven hundred and seventy-seven feet above the level of the sea, there are the remains of a strong fortress, an oblong building with a square tower at its north-east corner; the walls are seven feet in thickness, and constructed of rather soft limestone. It is comparatively modern, but is quite deserted and allowed to fall into decay. South of this fortress there is a solitary rock-cut nameless tomb, evidently of a very early period. A grooved recess, to the left of the square-headed entrance to it, proves that it was formerly closed by a "rolling stone," four feet

* There are many similar stories told by the people of Palestine in deprecation of inhospitality to wayfarers. For instance:—"One day, when Abraham was on a journey, he passed by a large heap of rock-salt, and he asked its owners to give him a handful of it, but they said, 'Alas! this is not salt; it is only rock in the likeness of salt.' And Abraham answered, 'Be it even as you have said!' And immediately the salt became tasteless rock, and the rock is called to this day 'the salt that lost its savour.'"

in diameter, and this renders it especially interesting (see Mark xvi. 4), for tombs of this kind are now very rarely met with (refer to page 100, vol. i.). Lieutenant Conder has carefully examined it, and he says that its "three *loculi* are cut in the very hardest stone."

Immediately to the east of Haifa there is a little valley called Wâdy es Salib (the Valley of the Cross). It is famous for its profusion of fragrant herbs, such as salvias of many kinds, wild thyme, lavender, and rosemary. Wild asparagus, too, may be gathered here.

When an Arab story-teller interrupts the thread of his narrative by describing details too minutely, he is rebuked for quitting the main road to wander right and left into the wâdys. I find it rather difficult to avoid this error now, for every valley and ravine of Mount Carmel has some especial attraction for me. But I must hasten onwards. A reference to the map will show that the central ridge of Carmel extends in a south-easterly direction from the Carmelite monastery, which is five hundred and fifty-six feet above the sea, and rises gradually till, at the Druse village of Esfia, a distance of about ten miles, it attains the height of seventeen hundred and forty-two feet. Between these two points there is not a single habitation and no cultivation of any kind. Large expanses of the undulating table-land are covered with thorny burnet (*Poterium spinosum*), shrubberies of myrtle, box and bay trees, thickets of arbutus and evergreen oaks, with small groups of wild olive and pine trees here and there. Clematis and bryony travel from tree to tree, and a multitude of wild flowers spring up after the winter rains. The *Styrax officinalis* flourishes here, and tall hollyhocks, red and pink, may frequently be seen. Many ruined sites and ancient cisterns, mill-stones, and oil and wine presses, remain to show that the mount was formerly well peopled and carefully cultivated. It is said that as recently as the second decade of this century there were seventeen villages still in existence, and inhabited by Druses. In the troublous times which followed they were nearly all destroyed, and only two now remain on Mount Carmel, namely, the above-mentioned Esfia, and Dâliet el Kûrmûl, two miles and a quarter south-west of it. It is somewhat remarkable that at this latter place alone the ancient name of the mountain is preserved by the native population. It was evidently called Dâliet el Kûrmûl (Carmel) to distinguish it from the Dâliet of the Rûheh district. Dâliet signifies "trained vine," and el Kûrmûl represents *הכרמל*, "the vineyard of God," hence it is "the trained vine of the vineyard of God." The vine is still carefully cultivated here as well as at Esfia, and corn-fields, orchards, and olive-yards give a cheerful aspect to these isolated Druse villages. There are a few Christians living here, on friendly terms with the Druses, but they are easily distinguished by their dress, which is like that of the people of Nazareth.

The houses are built of stone, and form a pleasant contrast to the mud-built hovels of the villages in the plains. The roof of the highest house of Esfia, which is situated on the highest point of the main ridge of Carmel, was chosen as the trigonometrical station during the recent survey, much to the satisfaction and pride of its owner. I stayed at Esfia for a short time once during a hot summer, greatly enjoying the cool fresh mountain air, and I can testify to the extreme kindness of the people. They are greatly superior in appearance and



VIEW OF THE GREAT SEA FROM ATHLÎT,

Through a large pointed arch, which is only held in position by the extreme hardness and tenacity of the cement used in the construction of this fortress.

intelligence to the inhabitants of the villages in the plains. Some of the women were really handsome, and the young girls and little children remarkably pretty.

About a mile and a half due south of Esfia there is a peak which rises to the height of eighteen hundred and ten feet above the sea. This is the highest point of Carmel; it is half a mile west of the central ridge or watershed, and is rarely visited.

From Esfia we can proceed to El Mahrakah (see page 89), at the south-eastern extremity



REMAINS OF A CRUSADING FORT AT TANTÛRAH.

Its shattered tower is thirty feet in height. In the distance the village of Tantûrah appears, on the site of the ancient city of Dor.

of the Carmel range. In a direct line it is only three miles and a half distant, but practically it is nearly five miles, and the undefined road, over rocky hills and undulating table-land covered with dense thickets and brushwood, is so tortuous that it cannot possibly be followed without an experienced guide. The rude quadrangular structure of hewn stones called El Mahrakah, "the place of burning," is on a terrace of natural rock, sixteen hundred and eighty feet above the sea, facing the plain of Esdraelon (see page 96). A steep, well-wooded cliff,

fifty or sixty feet high, rises behind it, and on a plateau beneath it there is an ancient rock-cut well called Bir el Mansûreh, shaded by a few fine trees, one of which is a Turkey oak (see page 92).

According to a tradition preserved at the convent and by the Druses of Mount Carmel, this was the scene of Elijah's contest with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, in the presence of King Ahab and all the children of Israel and the four hundred prophets of the groves (see 1 Kings xviii. 17—40). This identification is mentioned in a brief history of Mount Carmel written by an Italian monk in 1780. The late Dean Stanley, who visited this place in the year 1853, says: "The tradition is unusually trustworthy; it is, perhaps, the only one in Palestine in which the recollection of an alleged event has been actually retained in the native Arabic nomenclature. Many names of towns have been so preserved; but here is no town, only a shapeless ruin; yet the spot has a name, El Mahrakah, 'the burning' or 'the sacrifice.' The Druses come here from a distance to perform a yearly sacrifice; and, though it is possible this practice may have originated the name, it is more probable that the practice itself arose from an earlier tradition. . . . There, on the highest ridge of the mountain, may well have stood, on its high sacred place, the altar of Jehovah which Jezebel had cast down. Close beneath, on a wide upland sweep, under the shade of ancient olives and round a well of water (see page 92), must have been ranged on one side the king and the people with the eight hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and Astarte, and on the other the solitary and commanding figure of the prophet of Jehovah. Full before them opened the whole plain of Esdraelon, the city of Jezreel with Ahab's palace and Jezebel's temple distinctly visible (see page 96); in the nearer foreground was clearly shown the winding bed of the Kishon (see page 93). From morning till noon, and from noon till the time of evening sacrifice, the priests of Baal cried in vain, 'O Baal, hear us!' When the sun was sinking behind the mountain, Elijah's sacrifice was accepted by fire from heaven. The last act of the tragedy was performed on the plain below, when Elijah brought the defeated prophets down the steep declivity to the torrent of the Kishon, and slew them there." It has been suggested that this terrible scene took place close to Tell el Kassis, "the hill of the priests," a green mound situated in the narrowest part of the pass or valley called El Kasab (see page 89), which unites the plain of Esdraelon with the plain of 'Akka; and this is not improbable, for a path leads down from El Mahrakah to the river Kishon, just opposite to Tell el Kassis (see page 93). The river is generally fordable near this spot, but its bed must have been quite dry on this occasion after the long drought. The incident which followed can be perfectly realised at El Mahrakah. Elijah returned to the "high place" on the mount, but he told his servant to go up still higher, and look out towards the sea; and he went up to the top of the steep wooded cliff which hides the western horizon, and he looked and saw the Mediterranean beyond the plain of Athlit, just as it is represented on page 92, but he saw no cloud. Elijah said, "Go again," seven times, and after the seventh time the servant said, "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand" (a sure sign of coming

rain to this day), and soon the heavens were "black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel . . . and Elijah girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel" (1 Kings xviii. 45, 46). The view (on page 96) of the great treeless plain of Esdraelon (Merj ibn Amîr), as seen from El Mahrakah, shows the route they must have taken. They went towards the south-east, curving round the curiously shaped hill called Tell Kaimûn, which I have heard compared to a curved cucumber (the site of Jokneam), and then hastened onwards straight to Jezreel (Zerin), a distance of sixteen miles. The modern village and its little castle can be plainly distinguished in the illustration, and it is interesting to compare them with the nearer views shown on pages 26, 27, and 30, vol. ii.

The view from El Mahrakah, looking towards the north-east (see page 93), shows the Kishon under its best aspect, when its waters are abundant after the rainy season, when all the winter torrents of the hills are full and overflowing. The banks are fringed with oleanders, tall lupins, and St. John's wort, and many kinds of rushes, reeds, and grasses (see page 97). The rounded hill just beyond the river, on page 93, is Tell el Kassîs, and farther away, at the edge of the oak forest, there is a village (hidden by the tree in the foreground) called Sheikh Abreik, famous for its subterraneous caverns called Jehennum (Gehenna), which are well worthy of a visit. Farther down the river, at the lower end of the narrow pass which leads from the plain of Esdraelon to the plain of 'Akka, there is a village called El Harothieh. It is on a rounded hill, or rather a large mound, over which are scattered the remains of ancient walls and buildings. It was evidently at one time an important fortress, and is said to mark the site of "Harosheth of the Gentiles" (Judges iv. 16), the stronghold of Sisera, towards which his chariots and his hosts were fleeing when "the Kishon swept them away" (Judges v. 21).

Harothieh is rather more than half a mile from the Kishon, which near this point approaches so close to the steep slopes of Carmel that in some places there is not room for more than four or five horsemen to ride abreast with safety. It is conjectured that it was at this gradually narrowing pass at the foot of Carmel, within sight of Harosheth, that the horses and chariots of Sisera's defeated army became inextricably crowded together, and trampled each other down (Judges v. 22).

The river on emerging from the narrow valley flows between steep banks of rich loamy soil fifteen or sixteen feet high, and it is fordable only in two places. There is a ford not far from Harothieh. I crossed it once, in October, when there was very little water flowing; but the muddy bed of the river, which at that spot was about twenty feet wide, seemed to me as if it would swallow us up, and I was very glad when my good horse had scrambled up the steep slippery bank on the opposite side and landed me safely on its summit. A serpentine line of verdure marks the course of the Kishon across the plain of 'Akka. There is generally a firm sand-bar at the mouth of the Kishon which can be easily crossed, though the sea washes over it. Sometimes, however, when strong east winds sweep the bar away, a ferry-boat is used. Nahr el Mukutt'a, the modern name of the Kishon, signifies the "river of the ford,"

and this is the locally received interpretation of it; the translation "river of slaughter," which has been given by many writers, is, however, a correct one verbally.

But we must return to El Mahrakah, and thence travel westward to Athlit (see page 100), over the southern slopes of Carmel, an almost deserted district in which the ruins of several



THE CASTLE OF CÆSAREA.

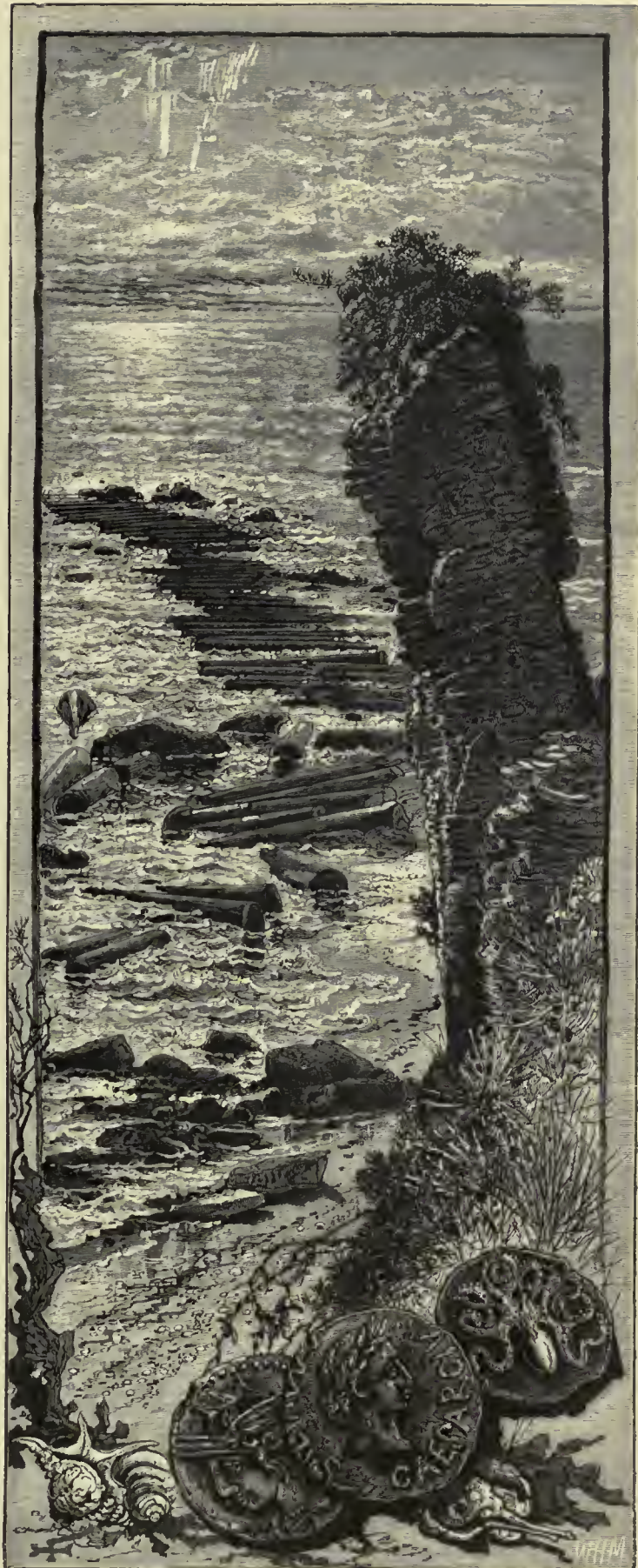
A mediæval structure, with marble columns built transversely into the walls. In the interior there are several vaulted chambers. It stands on the ancient mole on the south side of the harbour.

once-flourishing villages may be recognised. The large blocks of hewn stone scattered about indicate that there were many goodly habitations here in former times. The only signs of human life we see on our way are some Bedawin tents by a stream in a valley, and a few tents of charcoal-burners here and there upon the hillside.

The range of Carmel at its southern base is about seven miles in width. The Wâdy el Mâlih (Valley of Salt), which enters the plain of Esdraelon (see page 96) between Tell Kaimûn and El Mahrakah, marks its southern boundary (see map). The spurs of Carmel thence merge into the widening range of low undulating hills called Belâd er Rûheh (the Breezy Land), composed of soft chalky soil, which divides the great inland plain of Esdraelon from the plains of the coast.

THE MARITIME CITIES AND PLAINS OF PALESTINE.

Nowhere in Palestine do we recognise so many indications of the former prosperity of the country as in the strip of coast-land which stretches from the headland of Carmel (see page 88) to the port of Jaffa (see page 133), yet this is now one of its most neglected and poorly populated districts. It does not include one modern town or village of importance, and its once-splendid cities and its Crusading fortresses are in the last stages of decay or utterly destroyed. Nevertheless, the route is always interesting. We emerge from the Carmel hills nearly opposite to the ruins of Athlit (see page 100). Here the fertile but scantily cultivated coast-plain is about two miles in width. It extends northward for eight miles, closed in between a narrow ridge of sandstone rock,



COLUMNS IN THE SEA, CÆSAREA,

Formed of granite and various kinds of marble; they are relics of Herod's city which were used by mediæval builders to strengthen sea walls which have now perished.

which borders the seashore, and the western slopes of Carmel. These ranges gradually approach each other till they almost meet at Tell es Semâk (Sycaminum) at the foot of the headland of Carmel (see map). From this point to Athlit the road, a very ancient one, on which the ruts of chariot wheels may be traced here and there, runs just within the ridge of rock, and the traveller only obtains occasional glimpses of "the Great Sea" through narrow fissures made fertile by winter torrents. The only village in this, the northern section of the plain of Athlit, is Tîreh, whose inhabitants are noted for their turbulence and daring. Its houses of mud and stone are clustered together at the mouth of Wâdy el 'Ain (Valley of the Spring), the central valley in the western slopes of Carmel, and are surrounded by cultivated fields and orchards.*

Exactly opposite to Athlit (Castellum Peregrinorum) (see page 100), the coast-road turns abruptly and passes through a narrow and very ancient defile, cut through the broad ridge of sandstone rock; it is just wide enough to enable two horsemen to ride abreast freely. There are deep broad ruts in the roadway, made by chariot wheels many centuries ago. Lintels at each end of this rock-cut passage show that it was protected by gates; and there are the remains of fortifications on the cliffs above. From this rock-cut passage Athlit probably derived its mediæval name of Petra Incisa. The old chariot-road from this point runs outside or west of the sandstone ridge, but there is a narrow coast plain, which varies from half a mile to a mile in width, between it and the seashore.

The fortress of Athlit, which was built by the Templars in 1218, on ancient foundations whose history is unknown, stands on a rocky promontory which runs westward into the sea a distance of about a quarter of a mile. There is a shallow shell-strewn harbour on the south side (shown on page 100), and a rather deeper and much wider one on the north side, protected by a reef of rocks, called by the natives "Buwâbet" (the Portals). A large space of ground adjoining the promontory was enclosed by a strongly fortified wall, which can still be traced; it starts from the northern harbour and takes a southerly direction for eight hundred yards, and then runs westward to the sea, a distance of three hundred yards. Portions of this wall, which was constructed of very large hewn stones, are still standing, but still more of it may be seen in the western wall of 'Akka, which was almost entirely rebuilt of stones carried away from Athlit by Ibrahim Pasha, as related on page 79. Beyond the wall there was a deep fosse through which the sea formerly flowed, thus entirely insulating the fortress, which may be described as a miniature reproduction of the ancient Tyre (see pages 55 and 56), and it is actually called Tyre in ancient chronicles of the Crusades.

The citadel of Athlit occupies a rectangular space in the centre of the promontory. Its walls, fifteen feet in thickness and thirty feet in height, are constructed of sandy and rather porous limestone from a neighbouring quarry. Lieutenant C. R. Conder observes that "the masonry is all drafted and *in situ*, whence it has been supposed to be earlier work than the Crusading erections, but the posterns of the towers have pointed arches" (see page 104) "in drafted masonry, identical with that of the walls, showing that the Crusaders cut their own

stones and drafted them." In the south-east corner of the citadel are the remains of a magnificent church, described by early writers as a decagon, with three apses. Only one apse now remains; it has pointed arches with sculptured corbels. The roof was thrown down by the earthquake of 1837. Projecting from the north-east corner there are the ruins of a spacious hall, called by the natives El Karnifeh. The eastern wall of the northern tower of



PART OF THE NORTH WALL AND MOAT OF CÆSAREA.

The walls are six feet in thickness and are strengthened by buttresses; they are still from twenty to thirty feet in height. The moat is lined with masonry. There are three ruined towers in the north wall, two of which are shown above.

Athlit is still standing; it is eighty feet in height, and from a distance it appears to be a complete structure. Among the ruins of the ancient town, which stood within the citadel, modern houses and hovels, rudely constructed of ancient materials, have sprung up, and are inhabited by a poor and rather disreputable Muhammedan population. There are extensive vaults beneath this site; one, which is divided into compartments, has been explored to a



TOWER OF THE CASTLE AT CÆSAREA.

Built by the Crusaders. It probably occupies the site of "Strato's Tower," which was succeeded by the "Tower Drusus" of Herod.

distance of two hundred and sixty-four feet; another very large one has a groined roof with ribbed arches; a third, which is cemented, is said to have been "an oil vat capable of containing two hundred and sixty thousand gallons."

About half a mile to the east of the northern harbour of Athlit the Crusaders had, some time previously to the year 1191, built a small fort called Detroit (the "House of Narrow Ways") on ancient foundations on the sandstone ridge, at a point where it is seventy-five feet above the sea-level, at a short distance north of the rock-cut defile above described. From this "narrow way" it probably took its name. The fort having been greatly extended and



REMAINS OF A FORTIFIED KHAN AT MUKHÂLID.

A Saracenic structure, which has long been in ruins. It is nearly a mile from the seashore and midway between Cæsarea and Arsûf. The solitary tree near to it is a well-known landmark.

strengthened by the Templars in 1218, it served as an outpost for their fortress at Athlit. The courtyard, within which there is a tower, is called Khan Dustrey, a corruption of Detroit apparently. On the eastern side, north of the tower, there are rock-cut stables.

On the eastern side of the ridge, not far off, there is a fountain called 'Ain ed Dustrey, which forms a tiny lake, and then finds its way through a narrow valley to the sea. The first time I paused at this place, a group of goatherds with reed pipes were assembled round a clay trough where their flocks were crowding to drink. It was in the month of September, and the vegetation by the fountain and all along the stream was most luxuriant, consisting

chiefly of oleanders and lupins in full bloom, mallows, tall grasses, and large bushes of arbutus.

Nothing is positively known of the early history of Athlît, not even its name. It appears to have been included in the territory allotted to Manasseh, from which he could not drive out the inhabitants, "for the Canaanites would dwell in the land," though at a later period Israel became sufficiently powerful to compel them to pay tribute (Judges i. 27, 28).

So favourable a position for a seaport town as the promontory of Athlît, with its bay and two natural harbours, and with springs and extensive quarries and fertile plains in its immediate neighbourhood, could not have been overlooked by the Phœnicians, and the Greeks and Romans must also have occupied it. But the history of Athlît begins and ends with the Crusading era. It is, however, recorded that the Crusaders discovered ancient foundations both at Athlît and its outpost Detroit, and at the latter place the builders found a store of very curious coins which they could not decipher.

As already stated, the "Knights of the Temple of Solomon" (commonly called the Knights-Templar) built the fortress of Athlît (see page 100), and it was evidently a very strong one. The Sultan Muezzin besieged it unsuccessfully in the year 1220, and it was the last place held by the Crusaders in Palestine. It was finally subdued by the Sultan Melek-el-Ashrâf Khalîl, son of Kâlaoun, after his conquest of St. Jean d'Acre in the year 1291 (refer to page 91).

From Athlît we journey southwards towards Tantûrah (see page 105), a distance of six miles and a half. The ancient chariot road runs westward of the range of coast-hills, but a broad strip of sandy and marshy land separates it from the seashore. About a third of a mile south of the promontory of Athlît (see page 101), the shore line abruptly advances westward into the sea, and thus forms the commodious little bay of Athlît. From this point, for a mile or more, the sandy and marshy coast plain is nearly a mile in width. Through an opening in the rocky hills on our left we see the fertile plain of Athlît stretching to the slopes of Carmel, traversed diagonally by a footpath leading to the ruined site called "El Mezâr" (the Place of Visitation). The many large caves near to it, and a Muhammedan sanctuary, cistern, and well, attract the peasantry, especially shepherds and goatherds, to this spot. In its neighbourhood there are wooded ravines with the pleasantly suggestive names Khallet Rummâneh (Pomegranate Dale) and Khallet Zeitûneh (Olive-tree Dale); but we must pursue our way southwards. As we approach Surafend, a small village four miles south of Athlît, built on the crest of the low coast hills, we see signs of cultivation. Instead of sand-dunes, lagoons, and marshes, there are fields of sesame, millet, and tobacco bordering the road, and little groups of palm-trees near to the seashore.

Half a mile south of Surafend, which is famous for its fig-orchards, there is another village. It is called Kefr Lamm, and though built on the broad smooth summit of the widening coast range, it is only fifty-one feet above the sea-level. On one occasion, when I was travelling along the coast with my brother, we spent a night here. It was the last week

in the month of July, and we approached the village through fields of rapidly ripening Indian corn (maize) and fruit and vegetable gardens. The sheikh and all the chief men came out to meet us with pleasant words of welcome, for we were expected and well known there. We alighted on the outskirts of the village, which is very compact and built of sun-dried bricks; close to it there is a large enclosure, with buttressed walls, built of stone, for the protection of flocks and herds, and for storage of grain and fuel. I found my tent already pitched amid little mountains of wheat and barley, near to an extensive threshing-floor, where oxen were busy treading out the corn.

Carpets and cushions were soon spread for us in the open air, and coffee and pipes were brought. The sheikh and the heads of families sat opposite to us in a half circle, while the younger men stood round or rested on the heaps of wheat near. We were not quite a mile from the shore, and were facing the sea and the setting sun. The rocky islands and the ruins of Tantûrah (see page 105) could be plainly seen a little way to the south, and the tall tower of Athlit appeared far away in the north (see page 100). At the moment when the sun dropped down into the sea, the imâm (or village priest) rose and stood in the middle of a large and newly swept threshing-floor which was close by; he looked earnestly towards the south, and began chanting, in a loud and sonorous voice, the call to prayer—"God is most great. I testify that there is no deity but God. I testify that Muhammed is God's apostle. Come to prayer. Come to security. God is most great. There is no deity but God."

The sheikh and the elders who had gathered round us immediately rose and assembled on the threshing-floor in a double row behind the imâm, who thus looked truly like the leader of the little band; and when he uttered the usual ejaculations of prayer and praise, and recited the appointed verses from the Koran, they echoed his words and followed all his movements with precision and solemnity, kneeling and bowing their faces to the ground, and uplifting their hands and rising to their feet with one accord. They were joined by the labourers from the fields and neighbouring threshing-floors and by our Muhammedan servants; but some of the younger men who had been talking with us hesitated at first to attend to the "call to prayer." They looked at each other, as if undecided what to do; and then at us, as if they were ashamed or thought it impolite to leave us. We endeavoured, by keeping perfectly still and silent, to make them understand that we did not wish or expect them to neglect their devotions on our account. Suddenly they rose altogether and ranged themselves in a row at the edge of the threshing-floor, and their voices blended with the voices of their fathers as they cried, "God is most great! . . . May God hear him who praiseth Him!"

No women came forward to pray; they stood afar off, with their little ones, watching the assembly; but I do not think that there was one man or youth of the village who did not join in this service, which lasted about a quarter of an hour, and was conducted with the greatest solemnity.

Immediately afterwards supper was served. A wooden bowl, rather shallow, but about a yard in diameter, filled with steaming rice boiled in butter, was placed on the ground at a little

distance from us. Metal dishes containing meat, eggs, vegetables, and cream were added to the feast, round which the sheikh, the priest, and the elders of the village assembled. They ate quickly and silently, dipping pieces of their thin leathery loaves into the dishes of fried eggs and cream, tearing the tender morsels of meat to pieces with their fingers, dipping their hands together into the mound of rice, and skilfully and neatly taking it up in pellets. When they were satisfied, they retired one after the other to wash their hands and to light their pipes. Their places were quickly taken by the younger men and boys in turn, and when they had all finished the servants gathered round, eating from the same dishes, the simplest of which had



NEBY BEN YAMIN (TOMB OF THE PROPHET BENJAMIN).

A Muhammedan shrine about half a mile to the east of Kefr Saba. A well of good water adjoins it. In the foreground a peasant is guiding a primitive plough and a yoke of oxen.

been several times replenished, and the thin loaves of bread were freely distributed. Several sets of people silently swallowed their supper, while we leisurely used our knives and forks. The fragments that remained after the feast were not carried away until all the men and boys of the village had eaten there, but the women and children ate elsewhere and in private.

Coffee and pipes were again served, and by star and lantern light we sat talking with the sheikh and a few of the villagers till nearly nine o'clock, when they retired. For a little while we could see lanterns flitting about, but soon all was quiet and silent, and every one was at rest except those who were appointed to keep the night-watch. Dim lights gleamed from the

half-open doorways and windows of every dwelling, for it is customary in the East to keep a lamp burning all night in every occupied room. I retreated to my tent, and my brother and his attendants, wrapped in heavy cloaks, slept on the hillocks of wheat not far off. At five o'clock I rose, and from the door of my tent watched the sun rise over the Eastern hills and suddenly burnish the sea with gold. Soon all the villagers were stirring again. Coffee and milk and bread and fruit were brought, and bright-eyed children gathered round us to have a



KEFR SABA.

A straggling village consisting of houses built chiefly of sun-dried bricks, with extensive orchards to the west and south of it. It is fourteen miles from Jaffa, and is interesting inasmuch as it preserves the name of the ancient Caphar Saba.

share of the ripe green figs. Then we took leave of our kindly entertainers and pursued our way.

At Kefr Lamm we leave the ancient chariot road (traces of which are still visible) and follow a footpath which crosses the coast plain diagonally to Tantûrah, a distance of two miles and a half. We approach the seashore through a district of disused quarries, nameless tombs, ruins, and marsh-land. We soon come to a rugged promontory, on which stands a solid tower

thirty feet in height, formed of rubble faced with stone. The lower part is crumbling away. It was the corner block of a fortress built here by the Crusaders (see page 105). This place is now quite abandoned, its walls have fallen, and the cliffs are giving way. The modern village of Tantûrah is about half a mile farther south, and stands on the site of the ancient Canaanitish city of Dor (see Joshua xvii. 11), but all along the shore there are columns and capitals, partly embedded in the ground, slabs of marble, and hewn stones, remains of the Roman city Dora. Women and children may be seen collecting in large baskets the coarse encrusted salt, which settles in the natural hollows and artificial basins of the rocks on the beach below. Herds of cattle and goats, the chief wealth of Tantûrah, graze on the coast plain, which is here overgrown with thorns and thistles, dwarf mimosas, and low brushwood. The village of Tantûrah consists of about forty or fifty rudely built houses, made of irregularly piled blocks of anciently hewn stone, fragments of broken columns, and masses of mud and clay. On one occasion, in the month of September, when we were on our way from Jaffa (see page 133) to Haifa (see page 83) in an Arab sailing-boat, we landed at Tantûrah to pursue our journey by land, because "the winds were contrary." It was at the same time of the year (after the Fast of the Atonement, which is kept on the tenth day of Tishri, or towards the end of September) that St. Paul was tossed about by "contrary winds" on this sea, and when, as he said, "sailing was dangerous" (Acts xxvii. 9).

We were assured that the voyage from Jaffa to Haifa by sea would not occupy more than eight or ten hours, and as we were extremely anxious to arrive there as quickly as possible, my brother made arrangements with the owner of a little Arab sailing-boat to convey us there, with our servants and baggage. We were ready and waiting, when at midnight he sent word to us that "the wind was favourable," and that he was ready to sail. We hurried down to the dark wharf accompanied by our kawass and my servant Katrine, a woman of Bethlehem, and two Carmelite monks who had requested permission to travel with us. The great water-gate of Jaffa was opened for us, and I was somehow dropped gently into a little rowing-boat far down in the darkness below, where I was taken charge of by two sturdy boatmen. After much shouting and jolting we were all huddled together, and the boat skimmed rapidly over the water to the sailing-vessel which awaited us outside the shallow rock-encircled harbour, and to which with some little difficulty we were transferred. It was divided into three parts—the central portion being like an uncovered hold, four feet deep and eight feet square. The decks, fore and aft, were encumbered with ship's tackle and crowded with sailors, who were singing lustily. The hold, lighted by two lanterns, was matted and set apart for passengers and luggage. Our portmanteaus and carpet-bags served us for a couch, and the monks sat on their saddle-bags, wrapped in their comfortable-looking hooded robes. Poor Katrine, who had never been on the sea before, was very much alarmed. She rolled herself up in her cloak, stretched herself full-length by my side, and was happily soon fast asleep. Our kawass smoked his pipe in company with the captain above, and an Italian, who had smuggled himself and his luggage on board in the hurry and darkness, kept aloof with the sailors. The sky was bright

with stars, the south wind was strong and filled the sails, and by fits and starts I dozed till dawn of day. Then I roused myself and watched the little group around me—the hooded monks sleeping soundly, my brother at my feet leaning against a hamper, and Katrine so enveloped that I could not distinguish her head from her heels.

The favourable wind had ceased, and the sailors were busy taking in sail. By the time the sun appeared above the low coast hills the wind had shifted to the west, and we were in danger of being driven on to the rocks. It then suddenly veered to the north, and blew so violently that the captain was obliged to cast anchor, and we were tossed on a heavy sea near to a desolate coast where there was no possibility of landing. By nine o'clock the sun was very powerful. An awning made of the now useless sails was thrown over the hold. We found our quarters far from comfortable, but we were determined to make the best of them, and fortunately we were all good sailors. By noon the heat was intense and suffocating in the hold, so I climbed on to the deck and sat on a coil of rope, clinging to the mast. The strong wind and the sea spray revived me. We were still at anchor. The coast opposite to us, which was every now and then concealed by the high waves, was a range of drifted sand-hills, traversed by flocks of goats feeding on the scanty patches of pasture. Not a human habitation, not even a human being was visible, and not a boat or ship was seen all day.

In the afternoon the wind ceased, but the little ship rocked lazily from the effect of the sea-swell, which had not yet subsided. My brother read St. Paul's voyage to me, as it is recorded in the twenty-seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. It seemed to me more interesting than ever. We were not far from Cæsarea, the port from which St. Paul embarked (see page 108).

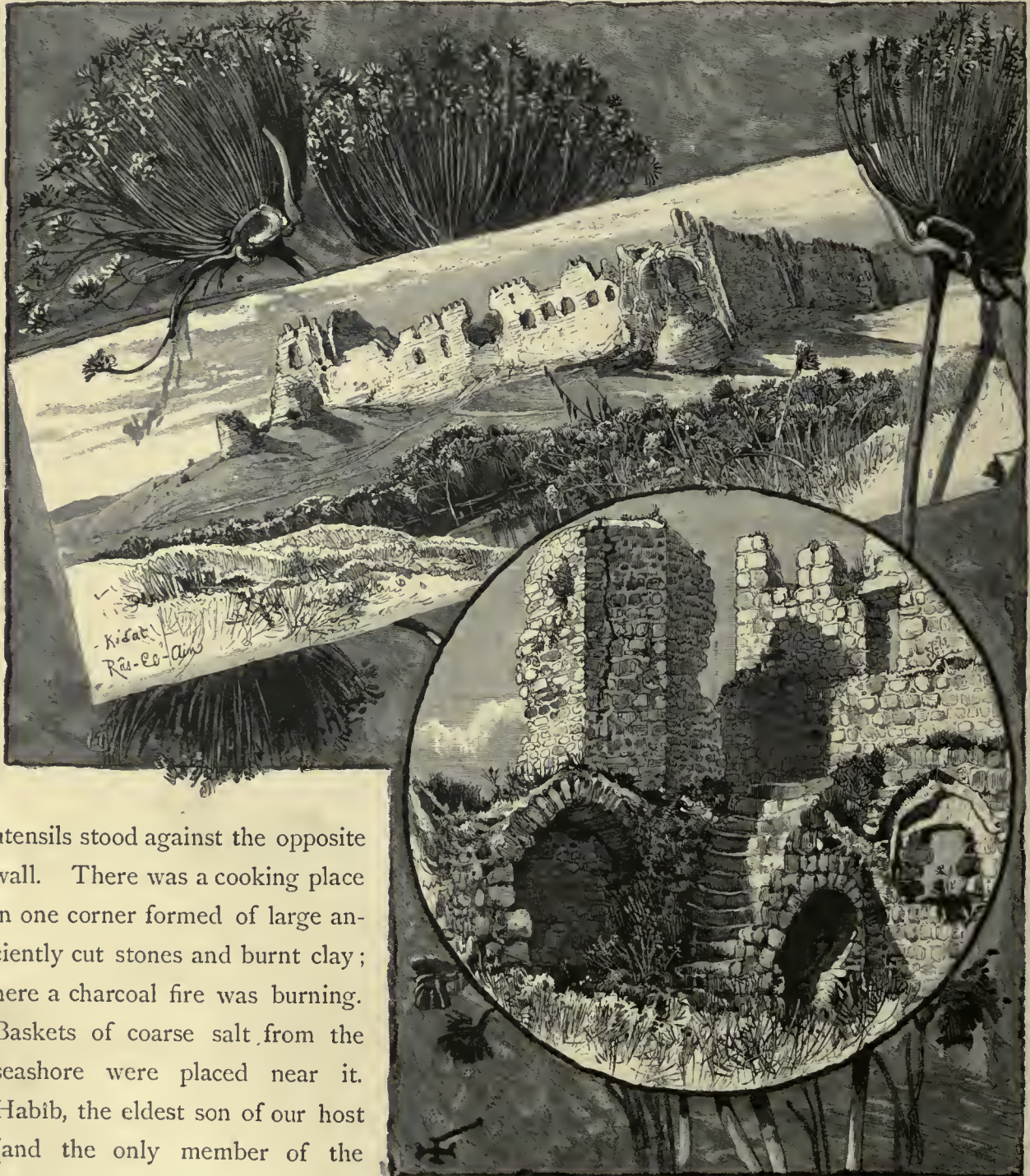
At sunset "the south wind blew softly." The sails were soon set, and in better spirits we sat down to our evening meal, and shared our chickens and preserved soup with the monks of Mount Carmel, who proved to be very pleasant fellow-travellers.

We passed a dreamy, restless night, "sailing slowly," and in the morning were nearly opposite Tantûrah. The wind had changed to the north-east, so my brother insisted on landing. We tacked about, put out to sea, and then allowed the strong wind to drive us towards the picturesque coast (see page 105). Little islands of rock and mounds of ancient masonry stood out before it, beaten by the waves. With some manœuvring the boat was brought safely to the beach, where there were plenty of Tantûrah men to meet us and carry us through the surf to the smooth yellow sands.

I was delighted to find myself on firm land again, and I shall always remember St. Paul's advice to the centurion, and vote against sailing in the Levant in an Arab boat during the equinoctial gales.

The custom-house officer, Abu Habîb (an intelligent and very well-informed man, who was afterwards our neighbour at Haifa), came to meet us. He guided us to his house, which consisted of one large square room lined with clay, and roofed with tree-branches blackened with smoke. One half of the ceiling was concealed by matting, and the other half was

picturesque with pendant branches. Small square holes served as windows, and the roughly made door was a portable one. A narrow mattress occupied one side of the room, and served as a divan by day and sleeping place by night. Large water jars, metal dishes, and cooking



utensils stood against the opposite wall. There was a cooking place in one corner formed of large anciently cut stones and burnt clay; here a charcoal fire was burning. Baskets of coarse salt from the seashore were placed near it. Habib, the eldest son of our host (and the only member of the family residing with him at Tantûrah), prepared coffee for us; in our presence he roasted

THE CASTLE OF MIRABEL.

Now called Kûl'at Râs el 'Ain, built by the Crusaders before the year 1149. It is now a mere shell and encloses a large space of ground, in the centre of which stands a small mosque.

the berries, and then pounded them in a stone mortar. A very large wooden box, like an ancient muniment chest, with ornamental lock and hinges of wrought-iron, stood near to

the open doorway, and upon this I rested. Gaunt-looking women, partly hiding their faces with their tattered white cotton veils, peeped at us, and dirty but pretty children came crowding round.



THE NAHR EL AUJEH FROM KÛLAT RÂS EL 'AIN.

The river rises out of the earth in several copious streams at the foot of the mound on which the castle stands. This mound has been satisfactorily identified as the site of Antipatris.

Katrine (who had never been so far from Bethlehem before) was in the meantime making a tour of the town, and presently she returned and led me without any hesitation to the house

which appeared to her to be the cleanest and neatest in the place. Her confidence in the ready hospitality of the people was fully justified. The women of the house received me with pleasant words of welcome, and led me to an inner room, the divan of which had been recently renovated, and there I gladly rested until horses were procured for us and we were enabled to proceed on our journey to Haifa.

Dor, דֹּר, a royal Canaanitish city (and probably the most southernly settlement of the Phœnicians in Palestine), was "with her towns" allotted to "the children of Manasseh," but they could not expel the original inhabitants, "the Canaanites would dwell in the land" (Joshua xvii. 12). However, in the time of Solomon, "the region of Dor" was compelled to furnish provisions for the King and for his household during one month in every year, under the superintendence of Ben-Abinadab, who married the Princess Taphath, a daughter of Solomon, and who was one of the King's twelve purveyors (1 Kings iv. 11). This was a very large tribute, and to provide it the region of Dor must have been rich in flocks and herds, and very highly cultivated, for "Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl" (1 Kings iv. 22, 23). On the hillside just opposite to Tantûrah, beyond the "Vale of Dor," there is a spring called 'Ain Ghûzâl (the Fountain of the Gazelle), which indicates that these graceful animals were numerous there formerly. A specimen of the fallow-deer has been recently found on Mount Carmel. When these hills were well wooded it was probably not very difficult for the people of Dor to contribute a good supply of game to King Solomon's table. Dor was evidently a strong and important city in the time of the Seleucidæ. It is related in 1 Maccabees xv. that Diodotus, surnamed Tryphon (the murderer of Jonathan Maccabæus and of Antiochus VI., and the usurper of the throne of Syria), "being pursued by King Antiochus VII. (surnamed Sidetes), fled to Dora, Δώρα, which lieth by the seaside, for he saw that trouble came upon him all at once and that his forces had forsaken him."

"Then camped Antiochus against Dora, having with him an hundred and twenty thousand men of war and eight thousand horsemen. And when he had compassed the city round about, and joined ships close to the town on the seaside, he vexed the city by land and by sea . . . assaulting it constantly." Thus the city was almost destroyed about the year 139 B.C. "Tryphon fled by ship to Orthosias," north of Tripoli (see page 9), and he soon afterwards either committed suicide or was killed by King Antiochus, who "pursued him."

Josephus relates in his "Antiquities of the Jews," book xiv., ch. 5, that when Gabinius Aulus "came from Rome to Syria as commander of the Roman forces," he caused Dor and many other cities, "which had been demolished" and had "been desolate for a long time" to be rebuilt, B.C. 64.

There are many autonomous coins of Dora in existence, but they are chiefly undated. The imperial coinage of Dora ranges from Caligula, A.D. 39, to Heliogabalus, A.D. 222. The commonest types are a female figure or bust veiled, with a turreted crown; and a head of Jupiter

with a laurel-wreath. Dora became an episcopal city in the province of Palestina Prima, but it did not long enjoy this dignity, for St. Jerome, who died at Bethlehem (see page 131, vol. i.) in the year 422, describes Dora as a city already in ruins and utterly deserted, but still worthy of admiration. Out of these ruins at a later period grew a station of the Crusaders, of which only a fragment remains, while the shore is strewn with relics of the Roman city (see page 105). On leaving Tantûrah we reapproach the coast road, which is here about three-quarters of a mile from the shore and close to the low sandstone hills. Through an opening in the range we see the shrub-dotted western slopes of Belad er Ruheh beyond the plain of Tantûrah, or, as it may be called, the "Vale of Dor," which is here about two miles in width, and is sometimes partially cultivated as far south as the Nahr ed Dufleh (see map), but more frequently it is made desolate by the incursions of the Bedawîn. No neglect, however, can destroy the beauty of this district in the early spring-time, when for a brief period all the uncultivated ground is carpeted with verdure and with wild flowers of the most brilliant colours.

Exactly opposite Tantûrah a footpath crosses the plain diagonally and leads south-east to a little double village called El Fureidîs (Paradise), nestled at the mouth of a winding valley which comes down from the summit of Belad er Ruheh, and at the head of which stands the village called Dalieh er Ruheh (the Trained Vine of the Breezy Land), seven hundred and twenty-eight feet above the sea (refer to page 103). Lower down in this valley there is a village surrounded by orchards called Umm et Tût (Mother of Mulberries).

But we must pursue our way southwards by the coast plain, which is here sandy and marshy and quite uncultivated. We pass many ruined and nameless sites, probably representing "the towns of Dor" (Joshua xvii. 11). We soon cross Nahr ed Dufleh (River of Oleanders) and then hasten onwards to the Nahr ez Zerka (the Blue River), the northern boundary of the broad Plain of Sharon (see map). Between these two rivers the Plain or Vale of Dor is narrowed by the advance westward of a bold mountain spur called El Khashm, and here, through neglect of the ancient system of drainage, it has degenerated into marsh-land. The Nahr ez Zerka is easily crossed where the old road intersects it, about a mile inland; but on one occasion, in the month of July, we and some fellow-travellers forded it close to the seashore, though not without some difficulty, for the river was broad, deep, and rapid, and there was no one to guide us to the easiest fording-place. A few hours sometimes make a great difference in the character of the mouth of a river—the wind may entirely carry away the sand-bar or change its position. Our kawass made many experiments before he found a safe path for us, which we traversed cautiously one after the other in single file, and landed on the opposite side very wet and chilly. On the south side of the river, close to the seashore, there is a ruined castle called El Melât, apparently an outpost of Cæsarea, and a little way to the north of the river there are a few rocky islands of the same name, Jezirat el Melât.

The Nahr ez Zerka was anciently known as the Crocodile River, and it is so called by Pliny. According to common report it is still entitled to that name. Many people living on the coast have assured me that they have seen crocodiles here, but it is admitted



SACRED TREE CALLED SHEIKH ET TEIM.

South of the extensive mound of ruins and tombs known to the Arabs as Tibneh, but which has long been regarded as the site of Timnath Sera, the city of Joshua.

that they are now rare; a dried specimen of one, three feet in length, said to have been caught here, was shown to me at 'Akka. The celebrated traveller, Richard Pococke, who was in Palestine in the year 1738, says that he was "credibly informed that there were crocodiles in the river," and adds, "they say that the crocodiles are small, not above five or six feet in length, but that they have taken some young cattle that were standing in the river."

Tradition says that the Nahr ez Zerka crocodiles were brought into the country by Egyptian colonists at a very early period : the Arabs of the district, however, relate the following fable, which professes to give a



THE TRADITIONAL TOMB OF JOSHUA,
In the rock cemetery at Tibneh. In the niches in its walls pilgrims placed lighted lamps, and their great number indicates that it was a highly revered shrine.

circumstantial account of their first introduction into the river :—

“ In ancient times an old man and his two sons dwelt upon the banks of the Nahr ez Zerka, and they fed their flocks in the green pastures of the plain. And the old man died, leaving to his two sons his hidden treasure and his flocks and herds.

"Now the younger son was industrious and prudent, and his wealth increased greatly. The elder one was profligate and idle, and he became poor. In his poverty he looked with jealous anger on the rich flocks and herds of his brother, and considered in his heart how he might destroy them. He journeyed to Egypt, and thence brought some young crocodiles, and having secretly placed them in the river, he went to a distant country. His hope was that his brother's flocks would be devoured on going to drink, or while feeding on the banks. He did not know that his brother, having been warned of coming danger in a dream, no longer watered his flocks there.

"Now after a time the elder brother returned to this place, and he went down to the river-side to wash his feet, without taking thought of the danger which he in his wickedness had spread there. The crocodiles swiftly approached him, and seized upon him and destroyed him. Such was the will of God, and thus the wicked fall into the nets which they spread for their neighbours."

Stories or fables of this kind are often very appositely introduced in ordinary conversation, to point a moral or give force to an argument, or to administer an indirect rebuke to a superior. The versions of such stories naturally vary slightly according to the circumstances under which they are related.

It is probable that the ancient city called Crocodilon was situated near to the Nahr ez Zerka. Strabo, who died in A.D. 24, speaks of it as one of the many cities of the coast of Palestine which in his time existed only in name. From the Nahr ez Zerka the Plain of Sharon extends southwards to the Nahr er Rubin, a distance of forty-four miles (see map).

The northern section between Nahr ez Zerka and Nahr Iskanderûneh, nine miles from north to south, averages eight miles in width: the greater part of it is either marshy or encumbered with drifting sand dunes. It is a district of deserted ruins, and is haunted by the Bedawîn, who occasionally cultivate some patches of land here, and reap scanty crops of wheat and barley (see page 111).

This desolate-looking region, however, includes a winding water-course called Nahr Mefjîr, to the north of which there is an oak forest nearly nine miles in circumference, near to the eastern hills, which are bordered by a strip of rich alluvial soil. Here there are a few insignificant villages, with small plots of cultivated land around them.

Groups of sarcophagi and mounds of ruins, representing ancient towns or comparatively modern villages, are numerous; and by the seashore, midway between the Nahr ez Zerka and the Nahr Mefjîr, a vast expanse of ground is covered with the almost indistinguishable débris of Herod's once-splendid city of Cæsarea Sebaste, so named in honour of Augustus; and within this area, in a central position close to the seashore (occupying, however, only about one-tenth of the space included within the walls of the Roman city), stand the ruins of the Crusading city which succeeded it.

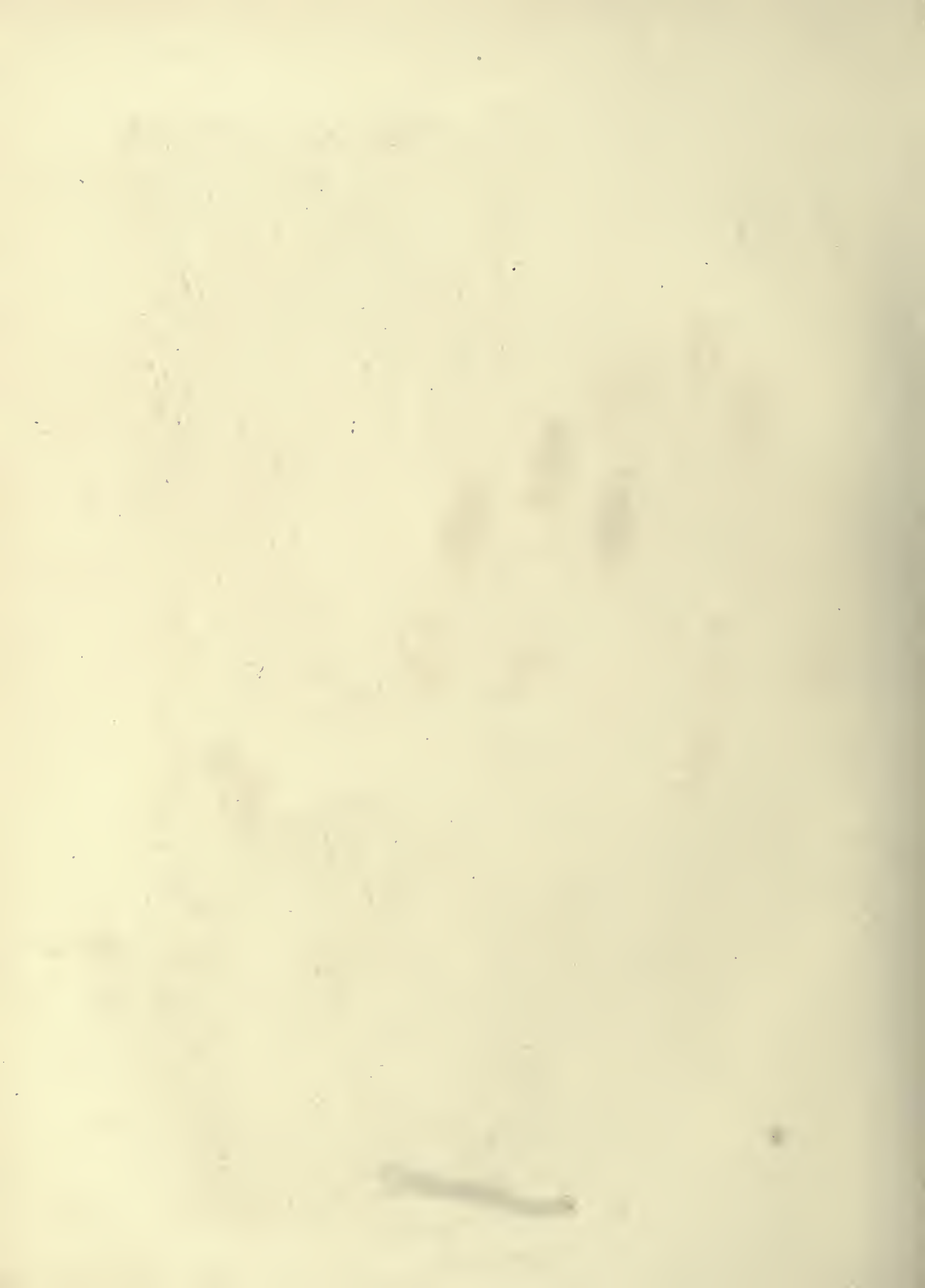
CÆSAREA SEBASTE was built on the site of a place called Strato's Tower, and is minutely described by Josephus. It was planned and completed by King Herod the Great within the



HARRY FENN. PINX.

J. C. ARMYTAGE. SCULPT.

CAESAREA.



short space of ten or twelve years, and was inaugurated with great pomp and splendour in the twenty-eighth year of his reign, B.C. 12. There were musical performances, public games, single combats, and combats with wild beasts; horse races also, and "such sports and shows as used to be exhibited at Rome and other places."

The multitude of people who came to the city to witness its inauguration were entertained in public inns and at public tables; and Herod ordered that the festival should be celebrated every five years, in honour of Augustus Cæsar, to whom the city was dedicated. "It contained sumptuous palaces and splendid edifices, all built of white stone brought from a distance," now represented by shapeless mounds, fallen columns, and dislocated masses of masonry.

There was a theatre of stone, and in the south quarter "an amphitheatre also, capable of holding a vast number of men, and conveniently situated for a prospect of the sea."

But the greatest work was the harbour, which had a double station for ships, and which Josephus compares to the Piræus at Athens. Its mole, the ruins of which still exist, extending a great distance into the sea on the southern side of the harbour (see page 108), was constructed of huge stones, and was originally, according to Josephus, "two hundred feet wide. One half was left as a breakwater, but the other half had upon it a wall with several towers, the largest of which was named Drusus, after a son-in-law of Cæsar, who died young." The great blocks of granite and the marble columns lying in the water are no doubt fragments of these structures. There were vaulted hostelries for the sailors and a terraced walk all round the harbour, where stood, on an elevation, a temple of polished stone, which could be seen from a great distance, and wherein were two statues, one of Rome and one of Cæsar. Of this temple a portion of the foundation wall remains, and Lieutenant Conder says "its white stones contrast with the brown sandstone blocks of the later builders, and attest Josephus's accuracy in describing the materials as brought, at great expense, from a distance." There are a great number of prostrate columns in the sea, upon a reef on the north side of the harbour (see page 109).

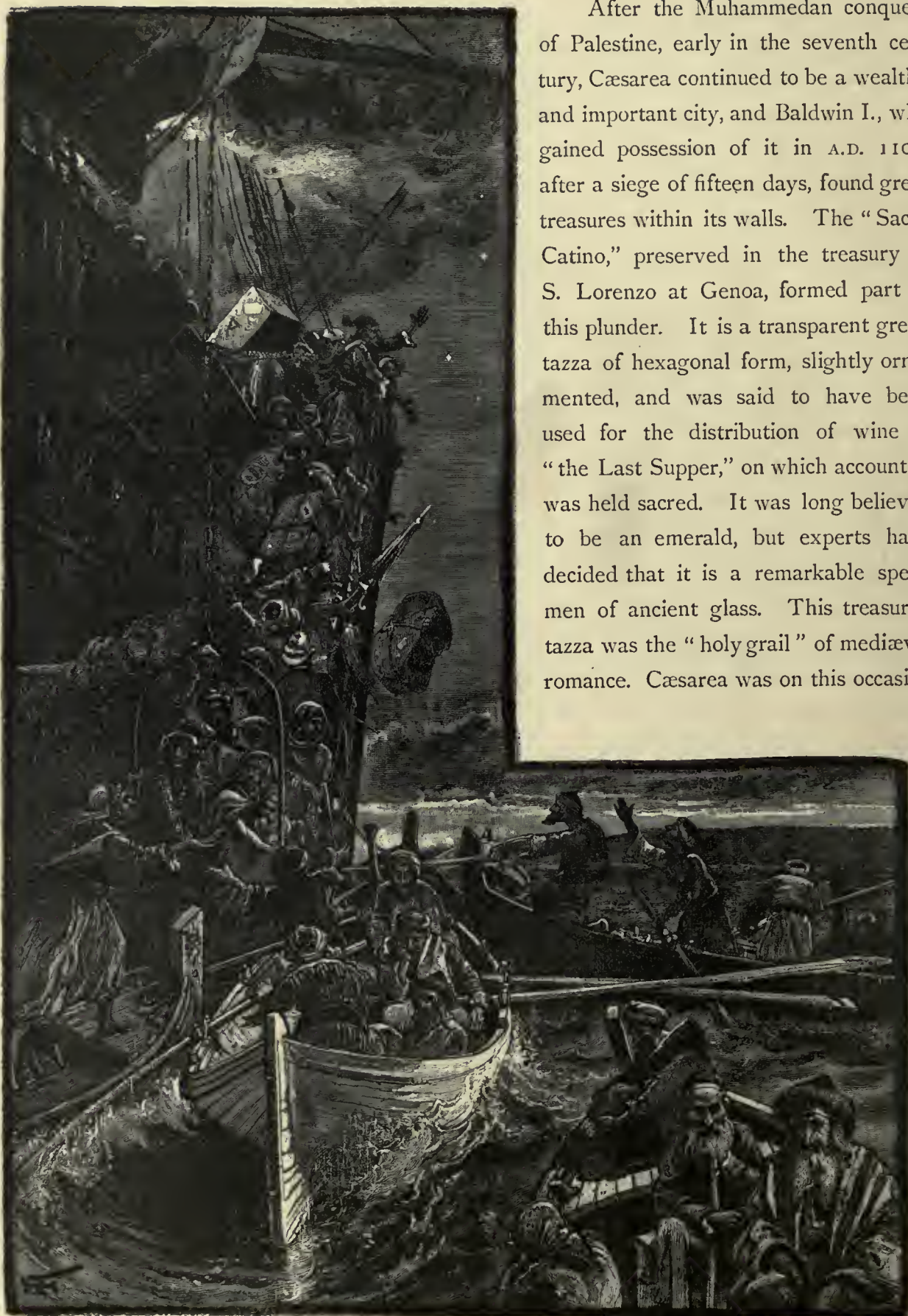
Cæsarea soon became the most important city in Palestine, and its chief port. It was the official residence of the Herodian kings and of the Roman procurators.

Repeated mention is made of Cæsarea in the Acts of the Apostles, especially in connection with St. Paul, who visited this place several times, and was detained here in prison for two years. At Cæsarea, Vespasian was declared Emperor, A.D. 70, and he bestowed upon the city the privileges of a Roman colony. The imperial coinage of Cæsarea extends from the reign of Augustus Cæsar (from whom the city derived its name) to Gallienus, A.D. 268.

At the commencement of the third century Cæsarea was created a bishopric, and was soon afterwards famous for its public school, in which for a time Origen taught.

Eusebius, the celebrated ecclesiastical historian, was Bishop of Cæsarea early in the fourth century, and towards its close the city was visited by Sta. Paula, the friend of Jerome. It is recorded that she saw the house of the centurion Cornelius, which had been converted into a church, and the house of Philip, with the chambers of his four daughters. In the sixth century the Greek historian Procopius was established here as professor of rhetoric.

After the Muhammedan conquest of Palestine, early in the seventh century, Cæsarea continued to be a wealthy and important city, and Baldwin I., who gained possession of it in A.D. 1101, after a siege of fifteen days, found great treasures within its walls. The "Sacro Catino," preserved in the treasury of S. Lorenzo at Genoa, formed part of this plunder. It is a transparent green tazza of hexagonal form, slightly ornamented, and was said to have been used for the distribution of wine at "the Last Supper," on which account it was held sacred. It was long believed to be an emerald, but experts have decided that it is a remarkable specimen of ancient glass. This treasured tazza was the "holy grail" of mediæval romance. Cæsarea was on this occasion

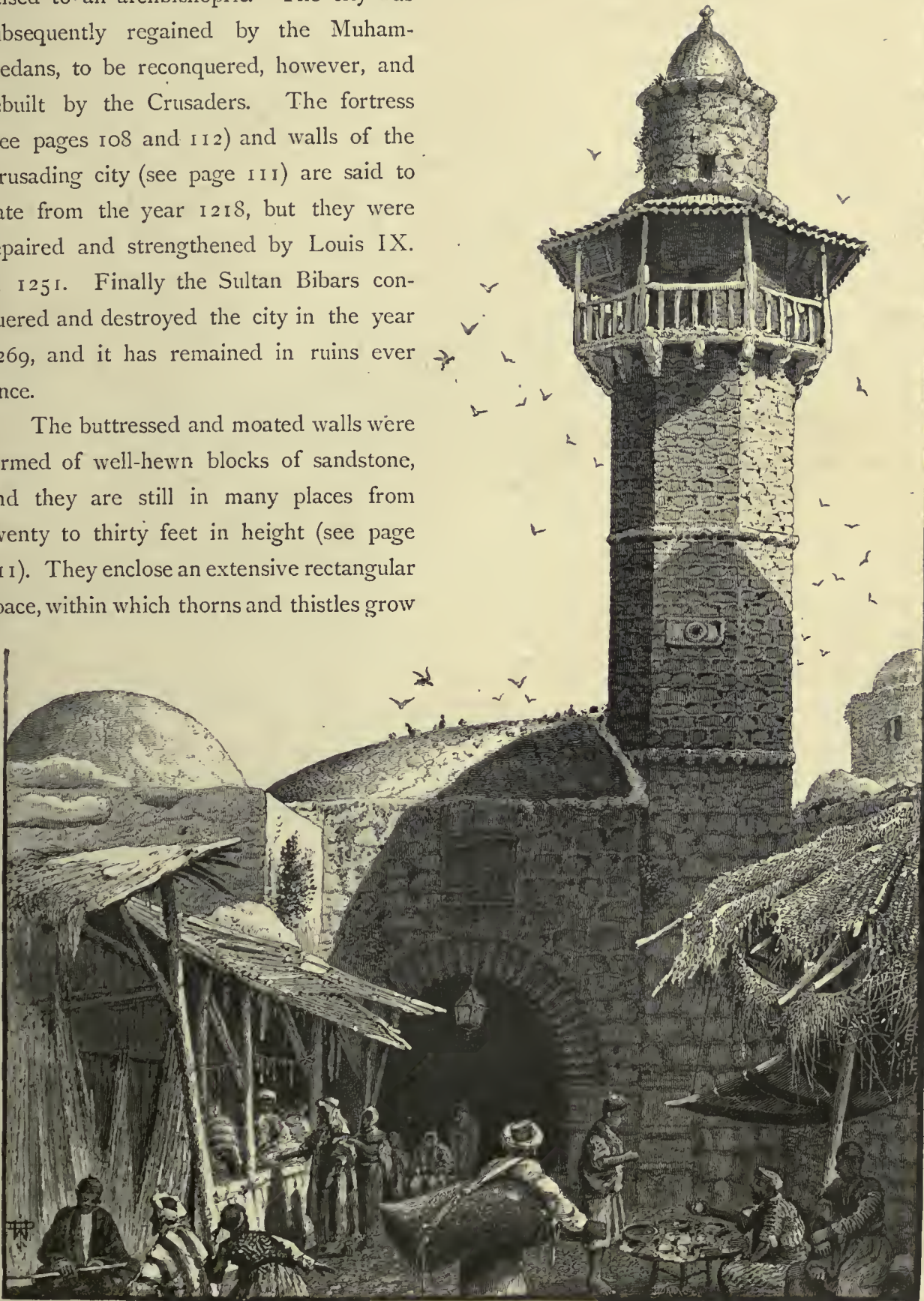


LANDING AT JAFFA.

This is always attended with difficulty, as there is no harbour for large vessels at Jaffa. Steamers are obliged to anchor in the roadstead about half a mile from the shore, and passengers are landed in small Arab boats.

raised to an archbishopric. The city was subsequently regained by the Muhammedans, to be reconquered, however, and rebuilt by the Crusaders. The fortress (see pages 108 and 112) and walls of the Crusading city (see page 111) are said to date from the year 1218, but they were repaired and strengthened by Louis IX. in 1251. Finally the Sultan Bibars conquered and destroyed the city in the year 1269, and it has remained in ruins ever since.

The buttressed and moated walls were formed of well-hewn blocks of sandstone, and they are still in many places from twenty to thirty feet in height (see page 111). They enclose an extensive rectangular space, within which thorns and thistles grow



THE MOSQUE AT JAFFA.

A modern structure in the north-east quarter of the town. It can be easily distinguished in the general view of Jaffa (see steel plate), where it appears between the masts of the Arab fishing-boats.

among fallen columns and huge masses of masonry, where, in succession, palaces and forums, Roman temples, synagogues, Byzantine basilicas, mosques, and mediæval churches have stood. The foundation of the cathedral can be traced, and near to the edge of the low cliffs there are the remains of a church of the Crusading era, consisting of its three apses and four massive buttresses, which stand erect and firm, though the walls they were intended to support fell long ago. (They are shown in the steel engraving.) I once spent an hour or two here quite alone, while my fellow-travellers and our attendants were all wisely sleeping or resting, during the mid-day hours of a midsummer day, in a shady place by the seashore. I mounted the low cliff and wandered among the ruins. Not a human being was visible, and I shall never forget the impression which the solitude and silence and utter desolation of this place made upon me. There are a few cisterns, but only one shallow well of brackish water, within the walls; but the Roman city was evidently well supplied. There are traces of a low-level aqueduct, which brought water from Nahr ez Zerka, and fragments remain of a high-level conduit, which crossed the marshes on arches of fine masonry, and conveyed spring water from the main source of the Zerka, in the distant hills.

On the sandy shore south of the mole (see page 108) I gathered beautiful pale yellow sea poppies and prickly sea holly, and found some good specimens of white and yellow-tinted *opercula*, but no perfect shells, though the shore was strewn with broken ones. The Arabs call these ruins Kaiseriyyeh, thus preserving the name of the city in its Greek form, *Καϊσάρεια*.

From Cæsarea we pursue our way southwards along the seashore, presently crossing the bed of the Wady Mefjîr (called by some writers Nahr Akhdar), and hastening onwards to a rocky point of land which forms a small harbour, where there is a rude landing-place for Arab boats, called the Minet, or port, of Abû Zabûra. It is near to the river Iskanderûneh (Alexander), to which it gives its more popular name of Nahr Abû Zabûra (see map). This river in the summer time has not sufficient force to reach the sea, but forms a shallow lake not far from it.

At this point we leave the seashore and ascend the cliff of the broad sandstone ridge on our left. The first village we come to is Mukhâlid, standing near to the high road about a mile from the edge of the cliffs, midway between the river Iskanderûneh and Nahr el Fâlik (see map). It is the centre of the melon-growing district. I was here once with my brother at the commencement of the melon harvest. We approached this place at about half-past seven one July morning. A lively picture of Arab life was before us. All along the coast, between the road and the edge of the cliff, as far as we could see, north and south, there were beds of various kinds of melons; and groups of dusky peasants in white shirts, with leathern girdles and large white turbans, were busily engaged gathering them and building them up in pyramids. Hundreds of camels were there too, some walking away well laden, others kneeling patiently while their panniers were being filled with the bulky fruit. White tents were pitched here and there in the melon gardens: they were the tents of the tax-gatherers, who had come to claim the tribute of the melon harvest.

We alighted in the midst of these scenes, and rested for a little while under the spreading branches of the solitary tree which is shown on page 113. We were about a mile from the edge of the cliffs. Looking westward beyond the melon gardens, we could see a broad strip of the sunlit Mediterranean, and a little fleet of Arab boats was sailing towards the north. The melon gardens are by no means picturesque. The large rough melon leaves lie flat upon the ground, which looked as if it were strewn with green and yellow marbles fit for giants to play with. There were no hedges or trees to break the monotony of the view, but the busy labourers gave life to it. The various plots of ground were divided by deep furrows, in which thorns and thistles flourished, but they scarcely appeared above the level of the sandy soil.



SHITTIM TREE AT JAFFA,

In the Muhammedan cemetery north of the town, close to the sea. Represented at the hour of sunset, the time of evening prayer.

We wished to buy a few melons, but the overseer of the labourers told us that we might take as many as we liked, though he could not sell them except by hundreds.

Some of the laden camels were journeying southwards, but the greater number were engaged in carrying the fruit down to the port of Abû Zabûra, where it was transferred to Arab sailing boats. After a refreshing rest we rode through miles and miles of melon ground. Wherever the land in this district is left uncultivated or fallow, the wild colocynth or coloquintida (حنظل, *hanzal*) springs up plentifully. This fruit, which is intensely bitter, was, on an average, three inches in diameter, and almost as hard as a stone, with a smooth green, white, and yellow rind marked like fine marble. Some ancient beads of Phœnician glass which I have seen appear to have been made in imitation of this fruit. We filled one of

our saddle bags with it, for it is only regarded by the Arabs as a weed. Squills, too, grow luxuriantly here, but they are ploughed up and destroyed.

The village of Mukhâlid apparently derives its name from a neighbouring and highly-revered Muhammedan sanctuary, dedicated to Sitti Saba Umm Khâlid (the lady Saba, mother of Khâlid).

The fortified khân of Mukhâlid is a good example of Saracenic architecture, but it has long been in ruins. The fragments of glass and hard pottery found near it indicate that this site was occupied at an early period, but nothing has yet been ascertained of its history.



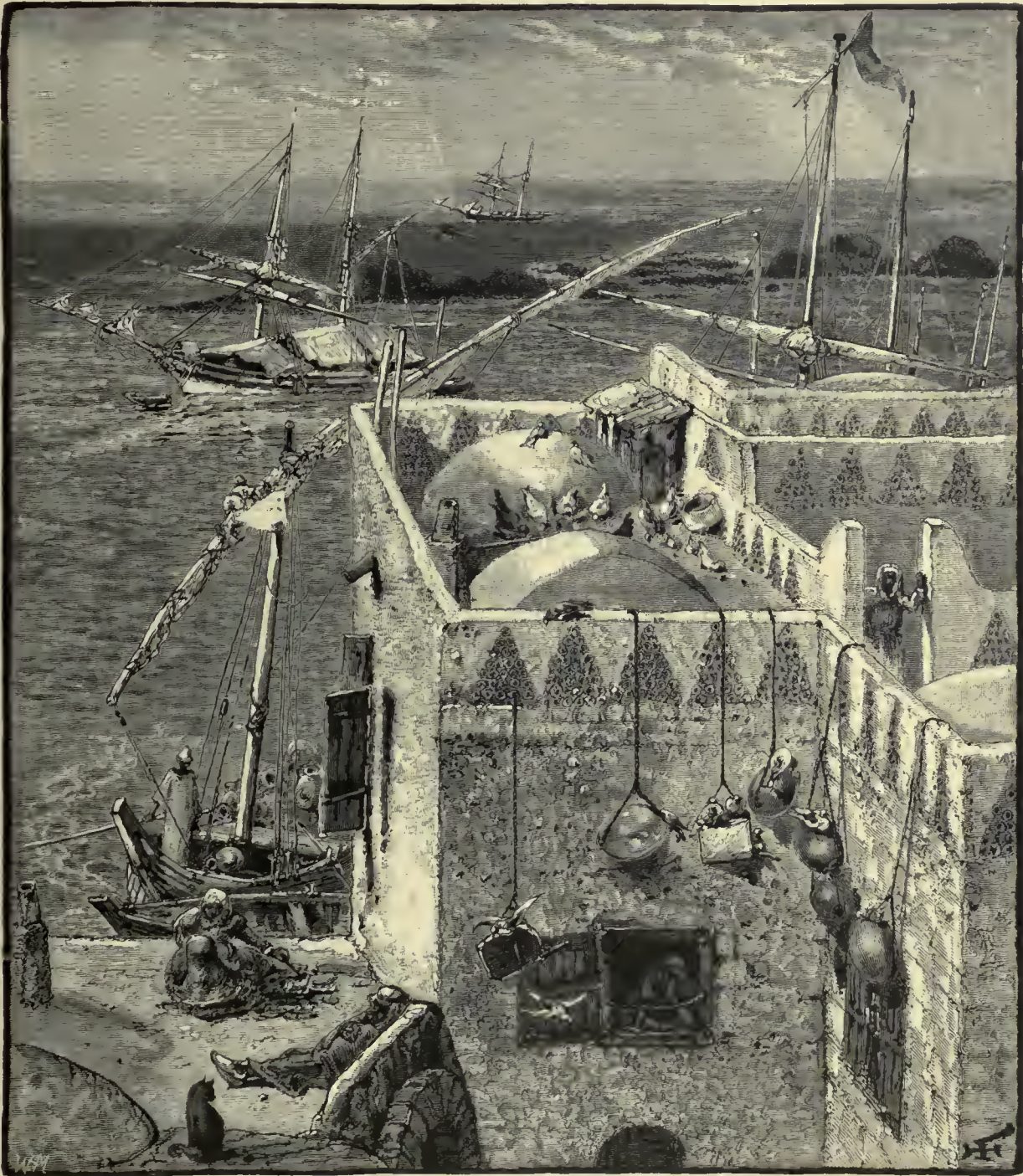
THE TRADITIONAL HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER.

A Muhammedan sanctuary. On the south side of the court of the house there is an arched recess, in which a lamp is always kept burning, and where pilgrims perform their devotions. A well of good water and a fine fig-tree add to the attractions of this "place."

From the eastern brow of the sandstone ridge, near to Mukhâlid, there is a fine panoramic view, extending from the headland of Carmel to Jaffa. Looking due east, we see the beautiful hills of Samaria (Har-Ephraim), beyond the plain of Sharon, the surface of which is here diversified by a central range of low, scantily wooded hills, which run southwards and terminate in an oak forest, the remains of the ancient forest of Arsûf, opposite to the ruins of the city of that name. This hilly district is said to support "a considerable population of bad character, but rich in horses, flocks, and herds."

The melon district terminates near to the river El Fâlik, which we approach through a wild shrubbery, formed chiefly of ilex, arbutus, hawthorn, and rue. Its name signifies "the

cutting," for it is an artificial outlet for springs which rise in the great marsh east of the sandstone ridge. The course of the stream is marked by tall flowering reeds (Syrian papyri), which in the distance look like miniature palm-trees, and it is bordered by thickets of oleanders,



VIEW OF THE ROCK-ENCIRCLED HARBOUR AT JAFFA,

From the roof of the house of Simon the Tanner. The building in the foreground, with its domes and perforated parapets, is a characteristic example of native domestic architecture in towns and cities of Southern Palestine.

lupins, and St. John's wort. Mounds of ruins near to the river prove that there was at one time an important fortress here. After crossing the stream we traverse an undulating sandy plain, quite uninhabited, uncultivated, treeless, and waterless, and with scarcely a sign of a

beaten track anywhere. This desolation extends southwards for nearly five miles, relieved only by occasional patches of *poa bulbosa* and marram grass, and thistles of many kinds, with pink, blue, and yellow blossoms. Drifted sand-hills on the right shut out the view of the sea, and another range on the left conceals the wooded hills of the plain of Sharon.

We pass some pools of stagnant water, partly overgrown with reeds and rushes, and notice a few caves and several groups of rock-cut tombs in the sandstone ridge on our left. This lonely way leads us to El Haram 'Aly Ibn 'Aleim (the sanctuary of 'Aly the son of 'Aleim), which stands on the coast ridge about one hundred and ten feet above the sea-level. It consists of a few substantial-looking houses clustering round an ancient mosque, said to have been built by the Sultan Melek ed Daher Bibars in honour of the famous dervish 'Aly Ibn 'Aleim, about the year 1270.

I spent a few hours here one night when on a journey with my brother. We approached it, however, on that occasion from the south, making our way along the seashore at time of sunset. Sea-gulls were flapping their broad white wings above our heads, a multitude of crabs (*cancer volans*) were running from their sandholes towards the sea, and oyster-catchers were flitting about, busily seeking an evening meal. The cliffs on our right were high and steep, and formed of a conglomerate of shells and sand. In some places the beach was very narrow and rocky. The twilight deepened rapidly, and a thick mist rose from the ground, so that we could only see the upper parts of the figures moving before us. We met a long string of camels swinging themselves lazily along: they looked very strange and shadowy, partly concealed and partly magnified as they were by the mist. Our kawass, who was riding a little way in advance of us, appeared to be gliding along without support, for his grey horse was quite invisible. Presently he guided us towards a curious winding fissure in the cliffs, an ancient water-course which served as a road. A low rough wall of rock stood in the middle and divided it into two natural causeways. The groom alighted and led the way, groping along the steep and winding road with a large lantern in his hand. We soon reached the top of the cliff, far above the sea mists, and found ourselves close to the precincts of the sanctuary. We were conducted through several courtyards and passages, then up a steep uncovered stone staircase to a wide terrace, where a number of Arabs were sitting round a little mountain of rice, and eating it quickly and silently by star and lantern light. The sheikh of El Haram welcomed us with great courtesy, and invited us to enter the spacious and lofty guest-chamber which opened on to the terrace. Little red earthenware lamps of antique form were lighted and placed in niches round the room, and then we could see that the roof was domed and fluted, and the walls plastered and decorated with incised ornament of good design. In central positions there were ornamental inscriptions in red and black, chiefly consisting of the names of prophets and saints, and invocations to God. But the whole surface was blackened with smoke from the wood fires which are always kept burning in the centre of the cemented floor in the winter. There was nothing in this spacious apartment but a few old reed mats, spread in the slightly raised recesses on three sides of it and in the corners. We had some of our tent furniture brought in,

and after supper and some talk with the sheikh we walked for a little time on the star-lit terrace, where our servants, rolled up in their heavy cloaks and wadded quilts, were already in deep sleep.

We rested for a few hours in the great guest-chamber, and when the mueddin (see page 147, vol. ii.) chanted the call to prayer from the little minaret close by, "Awake, sleepers, it is better to pray than to sleep," we answered to the call and then went on to the terrace.

The day was just beginning to dawn. It was three o'clock, and the loud shrill voice echoing from the courtyard below reminded us that it was the hour of the "first cock-crowing:" the "second cock-crowing" is at sunrise, about two hours later. At four o'clock we were ready to pursue our journey, and we rode away, grateful for the shelter which had been given to us in this ancient sanctuary.

At a very short distance from this place, towards the north, are the ruins of the Crusading fortress of Arsûf (see map). It is alluded to by Josephus under the name of Apollonia, but of its early history scarcely anything appears to be known, except that it was in ruins in the year 57 B.C., and subsequently rebuilt by the Romans.

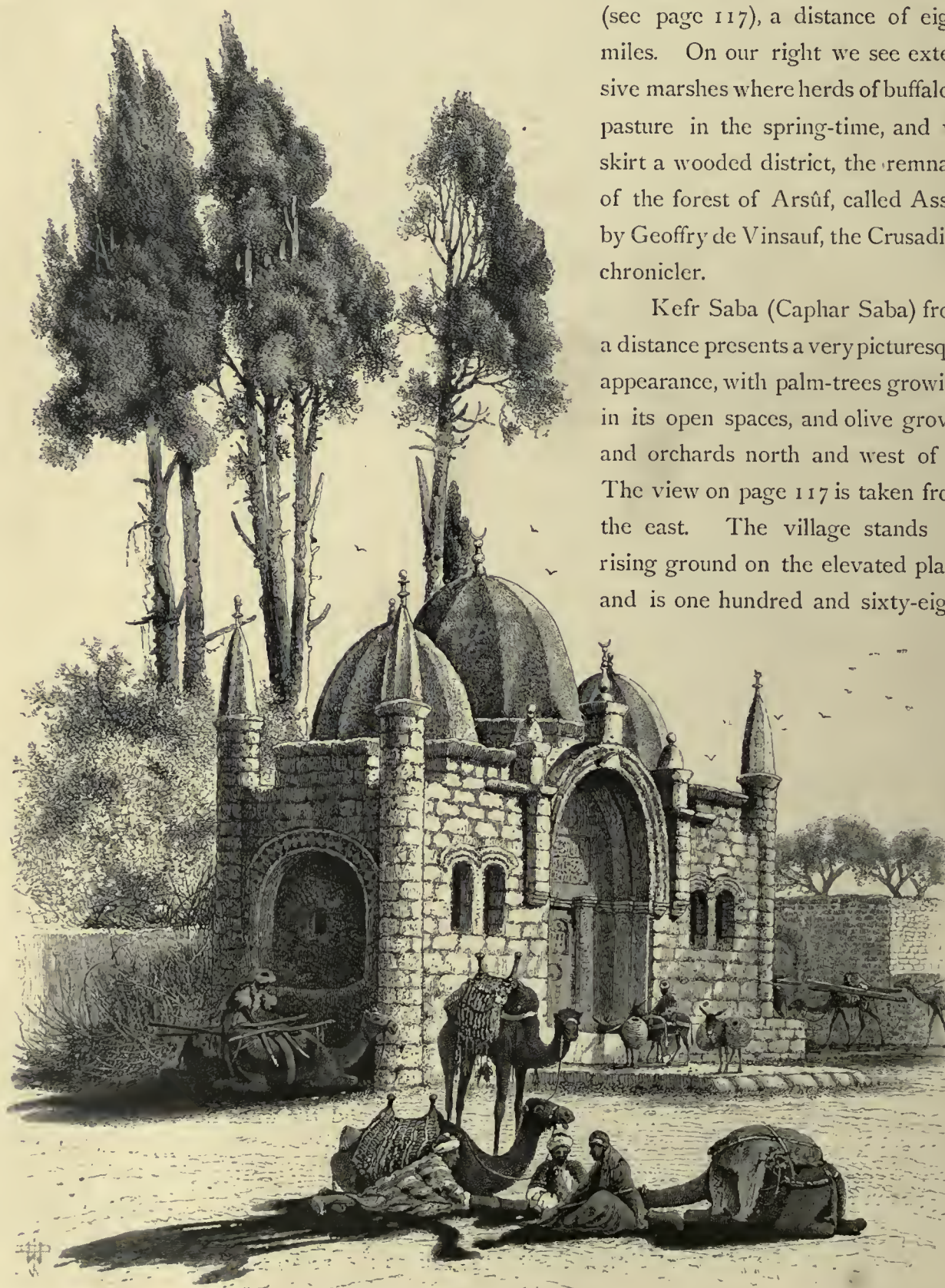
ARSÛF must have been a strong fortress in the eleventh century, for it is recorded that Godfrey of Bouillon, King of Jerusalem, besieged it unsuccessfully; but it shared the fate of Cæsarea, and was taken by Godfrey's brother and successor, Baldwin I., and, like Cæsarea, was recaptured by the Muhammedans.

During Richard Cœur de Lion's famous march of a hundred miles from Acre (see page 73) to Ascalon (see page 169), in 1191, for the recovery of the Crusading fortresses on the sea-coast, it was in the neighbourhood of Arsûf that the most important encounter took place, when Saladin's troops were defeated and the fortress of Arsûf regained. The Arab historian, Boha-ed-din, admits that it was the forest of Arsûf alone that saved Saladin's army from destruction, since without its shelter they would have been pursued and dispersed.

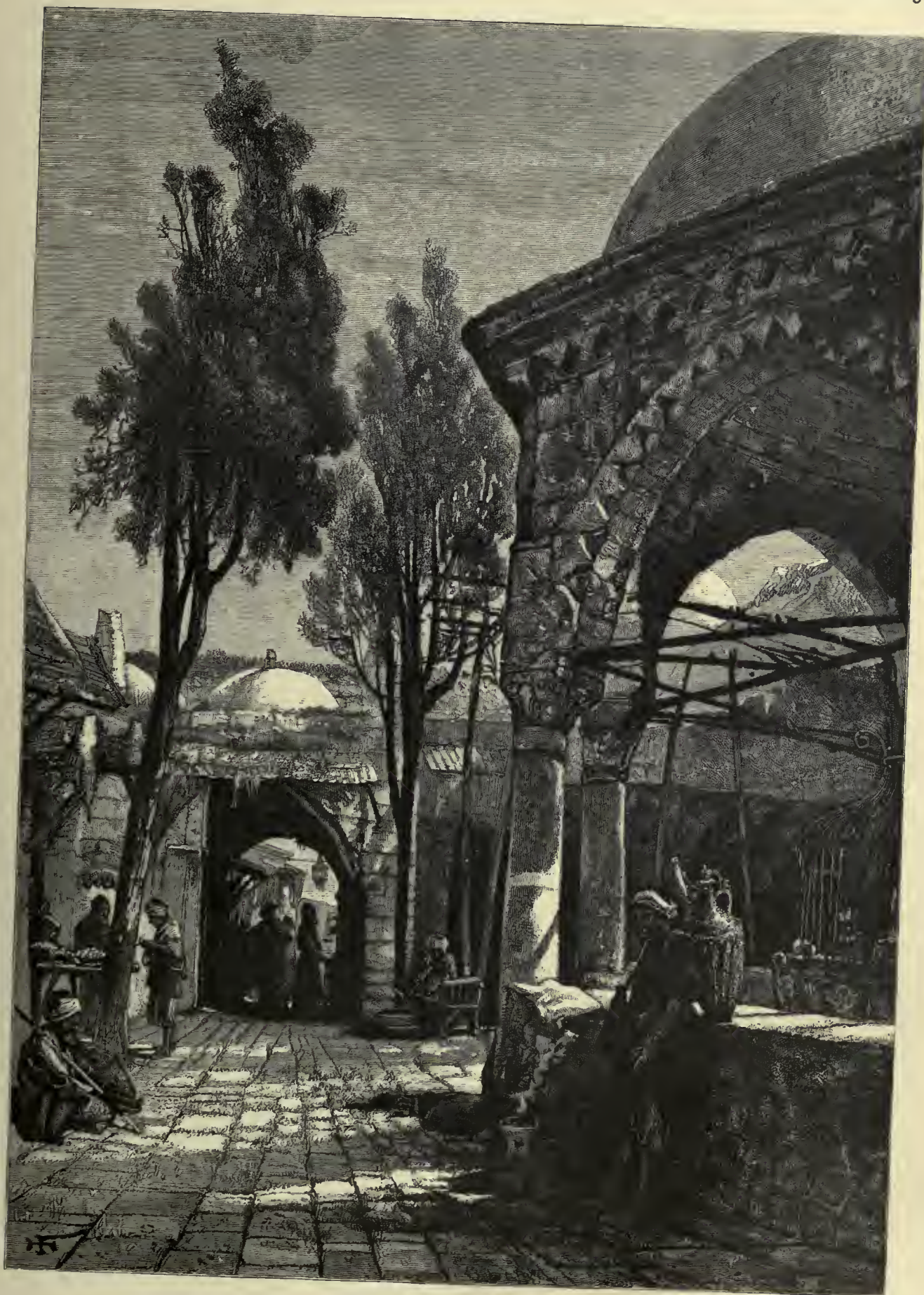
Arsûf was refortified by Louis IX. in 1251, but in 1265 this fortress was successfully besieged by the Sultan Melek ed Daher Bibars. The inhabitants were massacred and the place destroyed: it has remained in ruins ever since. Lieutenant Kitchener, R.E., in his "Journal of the Survey" (1877), says: "The Castle of Arsûf is very like Ascalon (see page 173) in the style of its masonry and the excellence of the cement employed. In places where the stones are weathered away, the cement remains. In other places the pointing remains as fresh as when the masons left it. The castle was built on a bad foundation of very soft rock, on the seaside: this has been worn away, and the walls have slid down bodily. They are naturally cracked and broken, but immense portions of the walls have rolled down from a great height without breaking up. In some parts the walls look as if they had been built on sloping scarps, so perfectly have they slid from their high position. A quantity of green sulphate of copper is scattered about, attached to the rocks in crystals." The harbour was well constructed, and "measured three hundred feet from north to south, and one hundred and twenty from east to west," with an entrance barely thirty feet wide.

On leaving this utterly deserted place we follow a track which leads due east, across the plain of Sharon to Kefr Saba (see page 117), a distance of eight miles. On our right we see extensive marshes where herds of buffaloes pasture in the spring-time, and we skirt a wooded district, the remnant of the forest of Arsûf, called Assûr by Geoffry de Vinsauf, the Crusading chronicler.

Kefr Saba (Caphar Saba) from a distance presents a very picturesque appearance, with palm-trees growing in its open spaces, and olive groves and orchards north and west of it. The view on page 117 is taken from the east. The village stands on rising ground on the elevated plain, and is one hundred and sixty-eight



A ROADSIDE FOUNTAIN AND TOMB.
The Sebîl of Abû Nabût, commonly called the Tomb of Tabitha (Dorcas).



PUBLIC FOUNTAIN AT JAFFA,
Near to the gate of the town, shaded by an octagonal domed structure, formed of eight pointed arches supported by columns.

feet above the sea. Many biblical topographists, including Dr. Robinson, have alluded to this place as the site of Antipatris, but there is nothing to indicate that any city of importance ever stood here. Its houses are built of sun-dried bricks and small stones, and its square rain-water tanks are made of clay. There are no springs in or near the village, but about half a mile to the east of it there are two wells of good water, one of which is at the sanctuary of Neby Ben Yamîn (Benjamin), shown on page 116. Some trees above the average size



SCENE IN A JAFFA GARDEN.

Two women engaged in working a sâkiyeh, a clumsy machine for raising water from a well to fill a reservoir. On the branch of pomegranate there is a chameleon.

grow near the shrine, and one of them appears in the foreground of the view of Kefr Saba (see page 117).

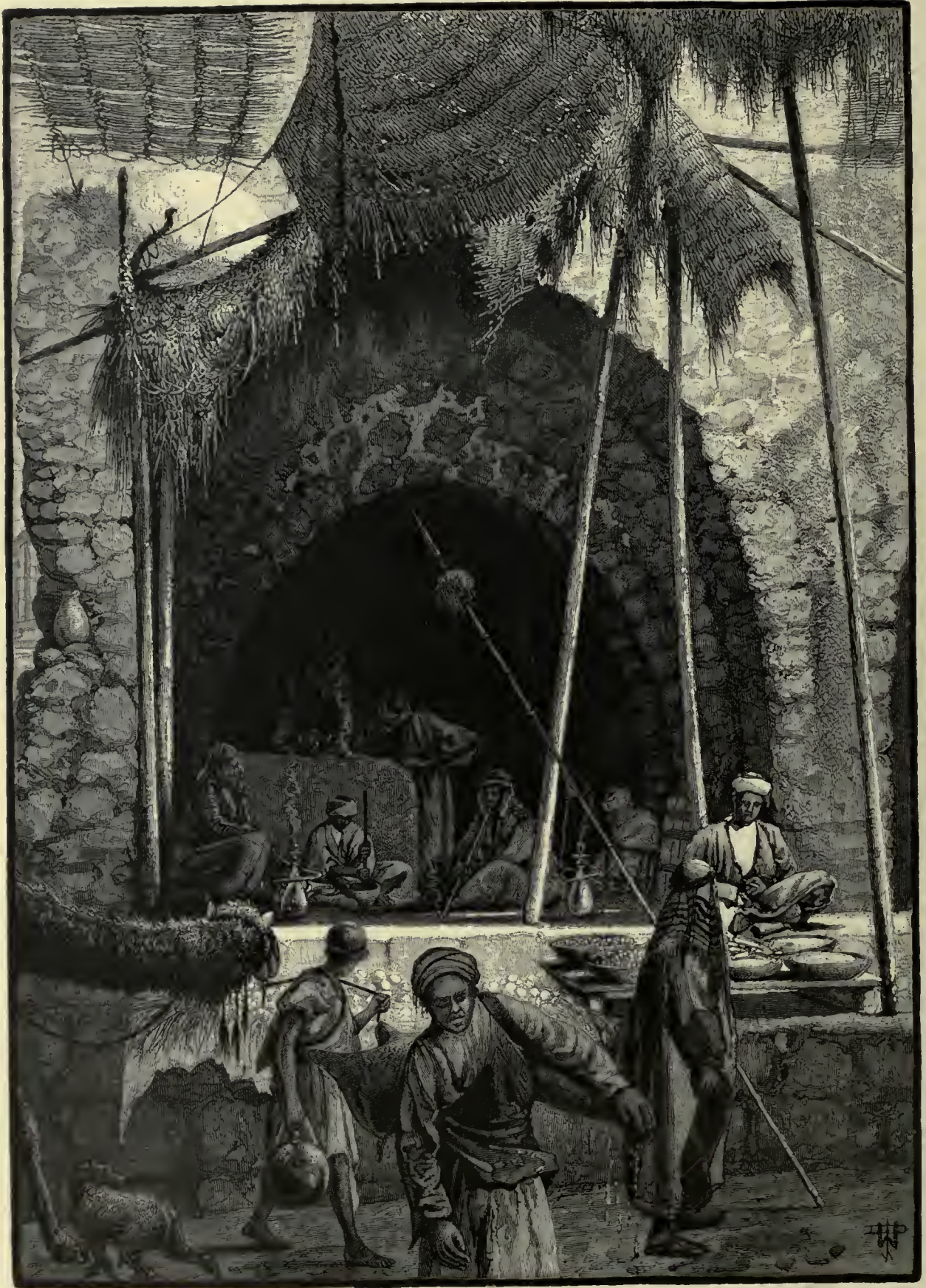
Josephus records that Herod built the city of Antipatris in honour of his father, Antipater, "on the plain of Caphar Saba, the finest plain in his kingdom," and he especially states that the city was encompassed by a river. The mound on which stands Kûl'at Râs el 'Ain is now generally regarded as the site of Antipatris. It is five miles and a half due south of Kefr

Saba, and on the same plain with it. It is strewn with tesserae, Roman bricks, and fragments of marble, and close to it are the copious streams which form the chief source of the Nahr el Aujeh (see page 121). Mr. James Finn, in his "Byways in Palestine" (1868), says:—"It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that this is the true site of Antipatris. The mound has still a dry trench round it, which must have anciently had its current of water;" and he adds, "no better spot could have been selected for a military station."

To Antipatris St. Paul was hurriedly conveyed by night from Jerusalem by a military guard, and thence conducted to Cæsarea (see page 108) on the morrow (Acts xxiii. 31, 32). On the Roman road, between Antipatris and Jerusalem, there is an extensive mound of ruins called Tibneh, which Christian tradition identifies with Timnath Sera, the city of Joshua and his burial-place (Joshua xxiv. 30). A remarkable tomb in a rock-cut cemetery, on a declivity south of the mound, is associated with this tradition (see page 125). Lieutenant Conder says:—"There are niches for over two hundred lamps in front of the tomb entrance. Within there is a chamber with fourteen graves or *kokîm*, and a passage which leads to an inner chamber with only one *koka*. . . . The great oak-tree some forty feet high, near the tomb, is called Sheikh et Teim (the chief servant of God)" (see page 124). M. Guérin, who regards this tomb as the veritable tomb of Joshua, states that the peasants opened the inner chamber shortly before his visit to the place in 1863, and they found a sort of candelabrum with three branches, in yellow metal. Flint knives were found in the *kokîm* of this tomb by the Abbé Richard in 1870. (For the Samaritan tradition respecting the tomb of Joshua, refer to page 233, vol. i.)

JAFFA, THE ANCIENT JOPPA.

JAFFA, or rather Yâfa, is one of the oldest seaports in the world, and its name has been preserved almost unchanged from the earliest times—יָפוֹ, *Yapho*, "the beautiful." To the "haven of Joppa" cedars of Lebanon (see page 237, vol. ii.) were sent "in flotes" for the building of successive Temples at Jerusalem (2 Chron. ii. 16; 1 Esdras v. 55). Jonathan Maccabæus besieged Joppa "and won it" (1 Macc. x. 75, 76). The city fell successively under Greek and Roman sway, and had been several times destroyed and rebuilt before the Arab invasion, A.D. 636. It was acquired by the Crusaders in 1099, and after having been lost and regained several times, was finally taken by the Sultan Melek ed Daher Bibars in 1267, who left it in ruins. It was not until the end of the seventeenth century that the place began to revive. It was, however, a walled town when Napoleon's army attacked it in 1799, and it was able to make resistance for a few days, but was finally taken by storm on the 4th of March, and a terrible massacre of prisoners ensued. Napoleon then caused the fortifications to be strengthened, and the place prepared for receiving supplies from Egypt, but after his defeat at Acre (refer to page 75), he gave orders for the fortifications to be entirely destroyed. They were accordingly blown up on May 27th, 1799. The walls were rebuilt under the superintendence of English and Turkish officers. No change has been made in the site of the city: the Jaffa



SCENE IN THE BAZAAR AT JAFFA.

A public café, in a deep arched recess, with a group of smokers. An attendant pounding coffee is steadying a wooden mortar with his naked feet. In the foreground there are fruit-stalls, and a Bedouin with his tufted lance; a water-carrier and a peasant boy leading a camel are passing by.

of the present century stands on the accumulated ruins of former cities, on a rounded hill, the summit of which is one hundred and fifty-three feet above the level of the sea (see steel plate, Jaffa).

Just in front of the town there is a semicircular belt of rocks, some of which rise high out of the water, while others are only indicated by the surf which dashes over them. These rocks (to one of which, according to Pliny, Andromeda was chained) form a large but shallow harbour, which can only be entered by small boats (see page 133). There is a wide opening to the north and a narrow one to the west. Steamers anchor in the roadstead half a mile from the shore, and passengers are landed in small boats (see page 128). The town of Jaffa is rapidly increasing in wealth and importance. Its population is said to exceed eight thousand, and of this



SANCTUARY OF IMÂM 'ALY:

Surmounted by one large and eight smaller domes. On the road between Jaffa and Ramleh, near the village of Yazûr.

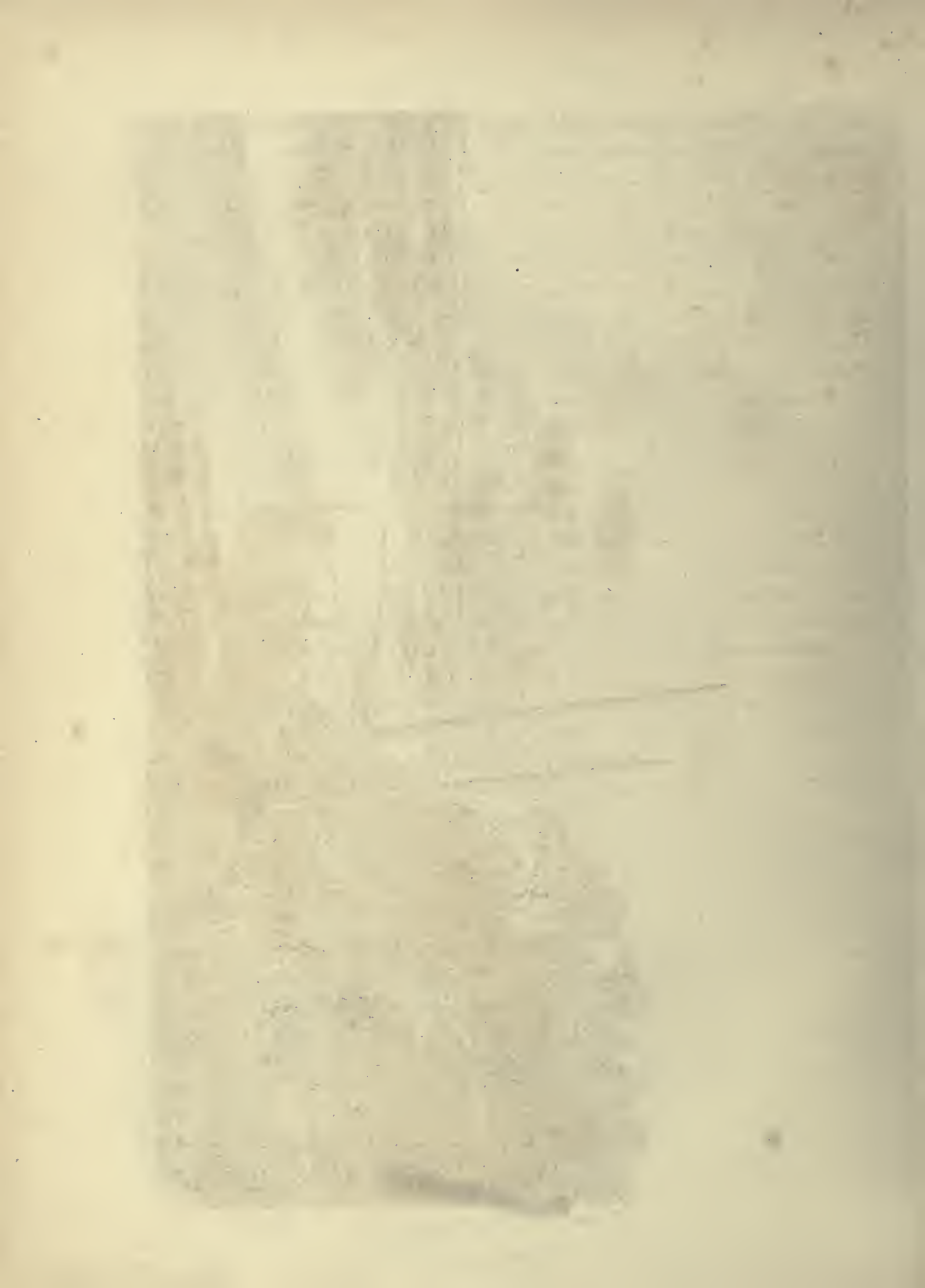
number more than two-thirds are Muhammedans. The suburban population also is considerable; there is an Egyptian colony north of the town beyond the cemetery

(see page 131), and the Temple colony (refer to page 98) occupies an estate called Sarôna, some

distance to the north-east of it; they have also acquired a settlement nearer to the city, which was founded by an American colony in 1866. A very large piece of ground beyond the Jaffa gardens, on the south-east side, has been granted to the Agricultural Colony of the Universal Israelitish Alliance.

The bazaars of Jaffa are well supplied, and generally crowded with picturesque and motley groups of people (see pages 129 and 140). Herr C. Shick, Government Surveyor of Buildings at Jerusalem, says in a recent report: "The town wall has been demolished, the ditch filled up, and a number of large houses and magazines have been erected." He adds: "As a sign of the advance of agriculture, it may be mentioned that the Jaffa gardens have increased in extent fourfold during a quarter of a century." These gardens are the principal attraction of the place. They extend about two miles inland, and nearly three miles from north to south. The surface of the ground is sandy, but there is rich soil beneath, and water is abundant. The gardens are enclosed with stone walls or with formidable hedges of prickly pear (*Cactus opuntia*). Each garden has its well, lined with masonry, and a raised tank or reservoir, which is filled by means of a sâkiyeh. The one shown on page 138 is being worked by two women, probably the wives of the gardener. The string of water-jars revolving round the wheel over the well can be distinguished through the arched opening (see also page 81, and for a fuller description of a sâkiyeh, see pages 94 and 95). These well-watered gardens produce a great variety of fruit and vegetables. The grapes are delicious and abundant, though the vines are half buried in the sand. The oranges of Jaffa are unrivalled, and are largely exported.

One of the chief resources of the inhabitants is the annual arrival of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. There is tolerably good hotel accommodation, and the Latin Monastery offers a welcome to travellers. It stands high on the slope of the hill, and is said to occupy the site of the house of Simon the Tanner, but a little Muhammedan mosque or sanctuary by the seaside claims to be the house itself (Acts x. 6) (see page 132). From the roof of the house there is a good view of the harbour (see page 133). The domestic architecture of Jaffa (see steel plate) resembles that of Jerusalem (see pages 8 and 9, vol. i.); there being very little timber available for building, the roofs are necessarily constructed of stone and are therefore domed. The base of the dome is always more or less concealed by masonry, so that a flat space may be secured for walking upon. These terraced roofs are generally protected by a low wall or parapet, as they must have been anciently in obedience to the law: "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence" (Deut. xxii. 8). The parapets and upper portions of walls of houses of this description are frequently constructed partly of earthenware pipes about five inches in diameter and eight or ten inches long. These tubular bricks are embedded in cement and arranged in fanciful geometrical patterns. The house-top represented on page 133 is a good example of this peculiar mode of construction (see also page 40, vol. i.). Near to the gate of Jaffa there is a handsome fountain (see page 137).

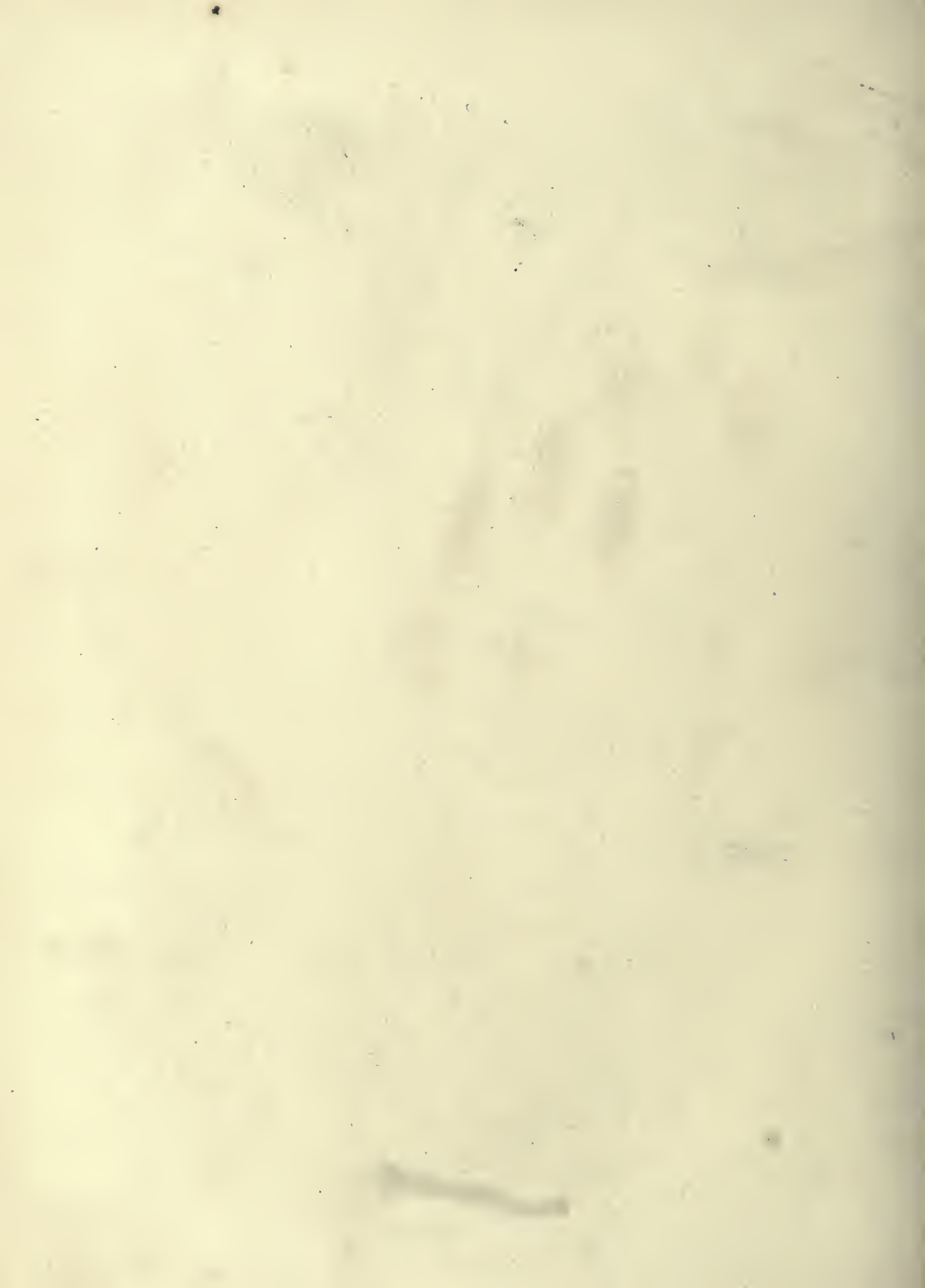




J. D. WOODWARD. PINXIT

JAFFA, THE ANCIENT JOPPA.

J. J. CREW SCULPT.



The journey from Jaffa (see page 137) to Jerusalem (see page 1, vol. i.) may now be made in an omnibus in about twelve hours; two vehicles run daily each way, under the superintendence of the Temple colonists. Telegraphic posts and wires, and watch-houses at intervals of about two miles or less, mark the course of the road (see page 195, vol. i.). Travellers who prefer riding usually start from Jaffa early in the afternoon, and spend the night at Ramleh (see page 148), ready to start for Jerusalem before dawn on the following day; but there was no choice in the matter when I arrived in Palestine in the year 1855, for there was not a wheeled carriage of any kind in the country, not even a wheel-barrow.

I well remember my first ride on the Jaffa road. We had spent a short time in quarantine, and had been afterwards kindly entertained by Dr. Kayat, the British Consul at Jaffa, and his family, in their pleasant bow-windowed house by the seaside, when, towards the close of a July day—our fellow-travellers and the muleteers with the baggage being in readiness—we mounted and set out on our journey. An old man in a coat of many colours led my horse up the steep and narrow streets of stairs, through the crowded bazaars (see pages 129 and 140), and out at the great gate north-east of the town. It was about six o'clock. The open space outside the gate was in shade, for the sun was going down towards the sea, and here picturesque groups of the townspeople, seated on low stools or on matting, were enjoying their pipes, while others, well mounted, were galloping backwards and forwards. We rode towards the south-east, along a broad sandy road, which led us to a bridle-path between dusty hedges of cactus (*opuntia*), the large fleshy thick-jointed leaves of which were fringed with yellow flowers, promising a rich harvest of prickly pears. In the fruit gardens on each side oranges, lemons, pistachios, apricots, almonds, and mulberries were ripening. The pomegranate tree showed its scarlet flowers, and acacias, locust-trees, tamarisks, olive, and fig-rees flourished, while here and there a group of palm-trees laden with golden fruit towered above them.

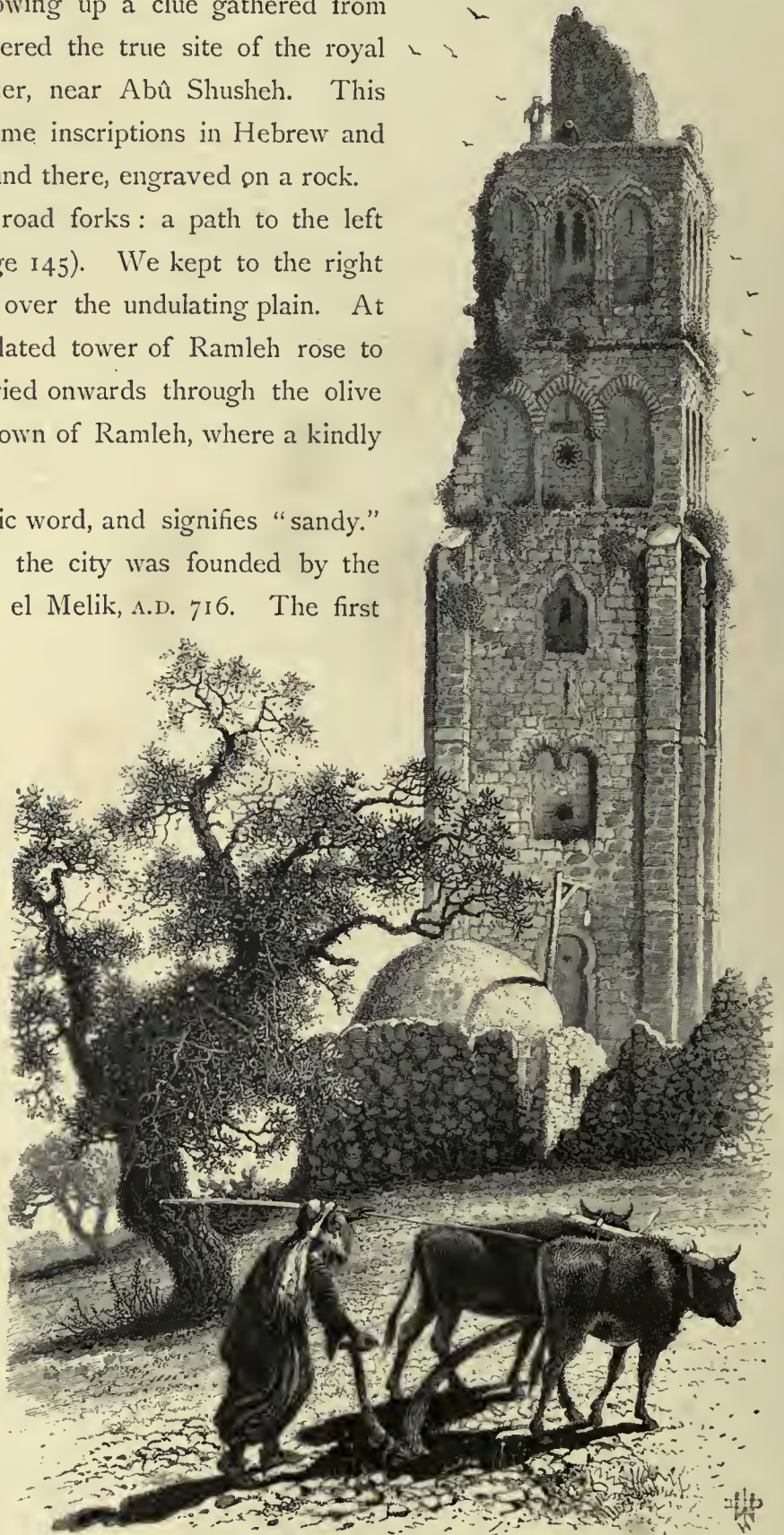
We paused for a few minutes at a wayside tomb and fountain, "the Sebîl of Abû Nabût," who was Governor of Jaffa at the commencement of this century. It is popularly called the Tomb of Tabitha. (Close to this tomb (see page 136), and extending northwards from it into the fruit gardens, the ancient cemetery of Jaffa was discovered, in the year 1874, by M. C. Clermont Ganneau. It contains many rock-cut tombs, and the circle of ground which includes them is known as Ard Dhabitha, "the land of Dhabitha.") It was about half-past six when we reached the open country beyond the gardens. The sun went down. Vultures and kites were sweeping through the air. As the darkness increased our little party, including our servants and six muleteers, assembled together to keep in close company for the rest of the way. We could distinguish parties of field labourers and oxen at rest by the roadside, and sometimes we came to a rude threshing-floor, where by the light of a bonfire of weeds and thorns we saw Rembrandt-like groups of rough-looking peasants, some of them sleeping, others lighting their long pipes with the fragrant embers.

The nine-domed sanctuary of Imâm 'Aly presently appeared close to the roadside, its whitewashed walls gleaming through the darkness. It is near to the village of Yazûr (see map

and page 141). This place was supposed to represent the ancient Gezer (Joshua x. 33) until M. Ganneau, by cleverly following up a clue gathered from an old Arabian writer, discovered the true site of the royal Canaanitish city at Tel Gezer, near Abû Shusheh. This discovery was confirmed by some inscriptions in Hebrew and Greek characters which he found there, engraved on a rock.

Not far from Yâzûr the road forks: a path to the left leads to Ludd (Lydda, see page 145). We kept to the right and rode on in the darkness over the undulating plain. At about nine o'clock the tall isolated tower of Ramleh rose to view on our right. We hurried onwards through the olive groves and soon entered the town of Ramleh, where a kindly welcome awaited us.

Ramleh is a purely Arabic word, and signifies "sandy." According to Arab historians the city was founded by the Khalif Suleiman, son of Abd el Melik, A.D. 716. The first notice of it by a European writer is in "The Voyage of Bernard the Wise." He calls it "Ramula," and passed through it on his way to Emmaus (see page 152), in A.D. 867, when it must have already become a place of importance, for many coins of the Omeiyad and Abbaside khalifs had been struck there. Marasid el 'Ittila'a describes Er Ramleh as "formerly the capital of Filastin." Its original boundaries extended far beyond the present unwallied town. Ramleh passed through many vicissitudes during the time of the Crusades. It was held by the Crusaders from A.D. 1204 to 1266, when it was finally taken by Sultan Melek ed Daher Bibars.



THE TOWER AT RAMLEH.

Said to be the minaret of a large mosque which once stood here. According to an Arabic inscription over the door, it was built in the year 1318. It is known as the White Mosque.



RUINS OF THE CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE AT LUDD, THE ANCIENT LYDDA.

The nave and north aisle have been recently restored and converted into a Greek church; the south aisle is destroyed, and the remainder is used as the court of a mosque.

LYDDA AND RAMLEH.

THE traveller who, on arrival at Ramleh at sunset, can forget his fatigue and accomplish the ascent of the lofty tower overlooking the plains (see page 144), will be amply rewarded for his exertions by the magnificent view spread out before him (see page 148).

Though yet early in the year, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. "The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell." The fragrance from the orange-groves is wafted on the breeze, the last lowing of cattle and bleating of sheep returning to their folds fill the air with a pleasant sound—darkness and quiet are spreading over the land. The soil is still moist with the winter rains, not yet licked up by the dry easterly winds, and lagoons and sheets of water flash back the splendour of the setting sun. Abundant verdure, both corn and weeds, covers the rich loam, and when swayed by the breeze displays glints of crimson from the millions of anemones, the roses of Sharon, which lie shrouded among the lengthening grasses.

The whole goodly plain of Sharon is visible—from Mount Carmel on the north down to Lydda, from the eastern hills to the blue sea, now bathed in gold—a wilderness of weeds and thorn brakes, and yet a very paradise of colour and ever-varying beauty. Sharon was lovely in days gone by, when every acre was cultivated and teeming with an abundant population; it is yet lovely during the land's long holiday, at this time of year, before the fervid summer heat has parched up the land and reduced the plain to a barren waste.

Yet ascend the tower once again in the autumn and a different prospect presents itself. Far and wide the olive-groves have become dull and lustreless from the accumulation of dust, the mulberry leaves have disappeared, used as food for the sheep. The soil is parched up and dry, all verdure has departed, even the stalks of corn have cracked up and fled away on the wind, and there is left a sky of brass and earth of iron. Trees and houses quiver in the heated atmosphere, camels in the distance are seen with their bodies separated from their legs, in grotesque confusion, and there are sudden glimpses of oases in stony places, beautiful sheets of water and green trees where it is known to be only parched-up land. The villages, which so few weeks ago were thronged with mountaineers assisting in the lowland harvest, are now denuded of their normal inhabitants, who in their turn have ascended the hills to assist their neighbours. The corn has long since been harvested, thrashed, winnowed, and heaped up; the Government has taken its share, the landowners have taken theirs, the money usurers theirs, and what is left to the villages is now safely housed in the boxes made of cow-dung which serve for barns, and the people know what are their slender means for the coming year. They are a frugal race, who do their best to keep body and soul together—with very moderate success, for they are not only preyed upon by their own Government officials, but also by the Bedawin of the desert, who constantly make inroads from the south country and carry off the corn as it lies on the threshing-floors. They are probably descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the land, and their traditions go far to prove this. It was on these pasture lands that the royal herds of King David were wont to graze, and their excellence is referred to by the prophet Isaiah (xxxv. 1, 2): "The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon."

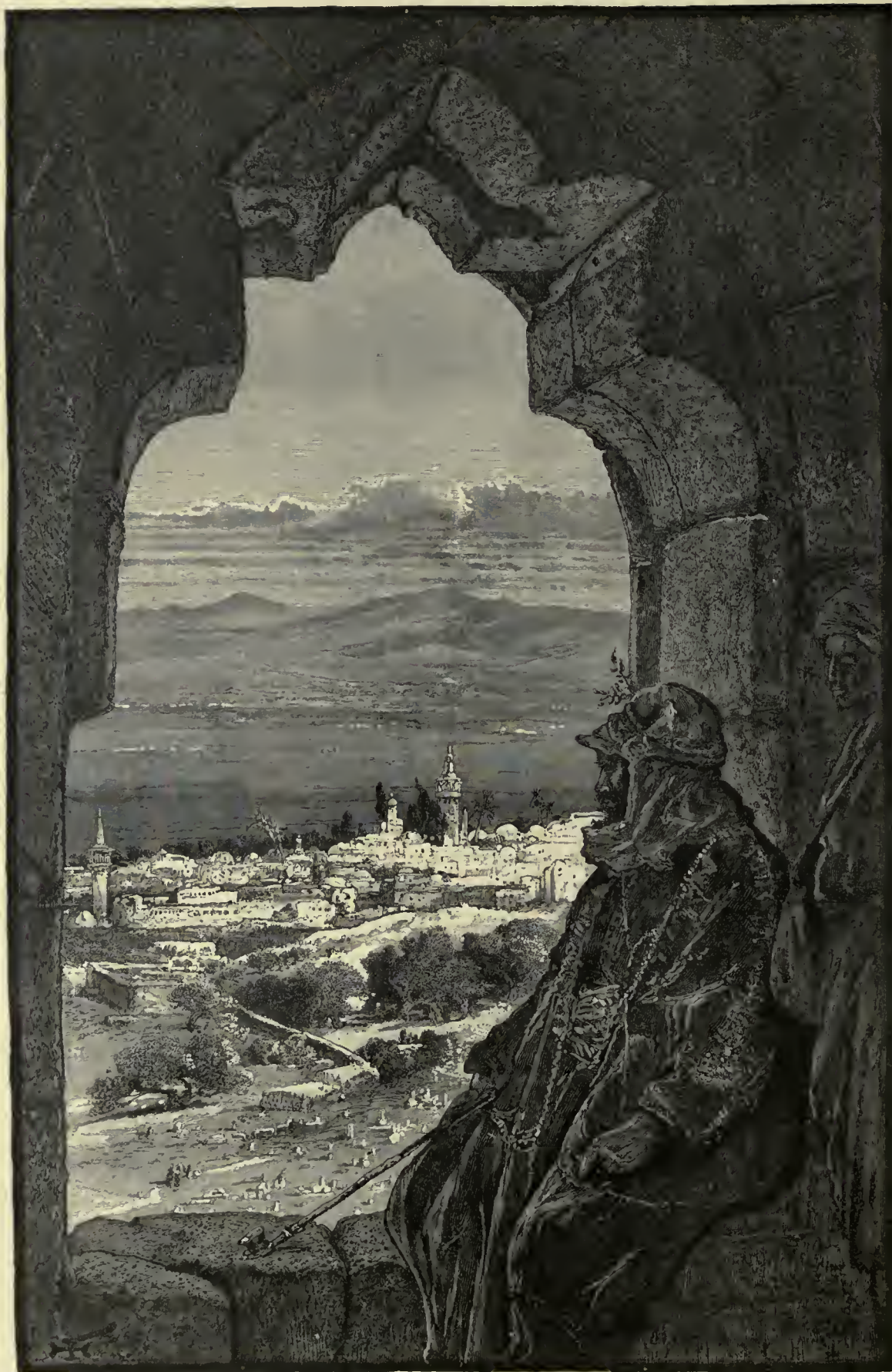
The desolation of the plain of Sharon is at present due to want of a stable and organized government. It is still well watered, it still counts its forests, and the sea-sand has not greatly encroached upon its borders; its soil is most fertile, and its people are able and willing to till the land, were they not ground down and hindered by the rapacious officials who are sent periodically to take from them their gains, under one pretext or another. These people are a rural race whose sympathies are evidently not with their Turkish rulers, but rather with the Egyptians, with whom, as in days of yore, they still keep up a close connection, not a few having been down to work on the Suez Canal. Like the Egyptians, they have raised the fruitful groves surrounding their habitations by the sweat of their brow. Irrigation is necessary to keep them in a flourishing condition, and this is kept up by means of water ever flowing from wells nearly one hundred feet in depth, the water-wheels (see page 138) of which are worked by contributions of animals, camels, horses, mules, oxen, donkeys, from the families in the villages, according to their wealth and breadth of lands.

Let us descend the tower and visit Ludd, the ancient Lydda, by moonlight. Passing over fields of ranunculus, anemones, saffrons, and other wild flowers now closed, we burst through a line of tall bushy reeds and grasses, startling a heron into flight, and see in front of us, on a flash of water, the beautiful ruins of Lydda, the city of our patron saint, St. George, held in honour both by Muhammedans and Christians. The church, the ruins of which were until lately so picturesque, has passed through many vicissitudes (see page 145). As early as A.D. 315 we know it to have existed here, the site of a bishopric, and dedicated to St. George, whose remains are said to be interred beneath. This church was destroyed in the eighth century by the Saracens, and again rebuilt by the Crusaders, again destroyed by Saladin and rebuilt by Richard Cœur de Lion.

But it is not only as a Christian site that Lydda is of interest—unlike the modern Ramleh, Lydda can lay claim to our interest as an ancient site; not, however, rendered conspicuous until the time of the apostles. Here it was that Saint Peter healed the paralytic one, and here he was staying when he was sent for to Joppa (see page 137), nine miles distant, at the time of the death of Tabitha. It assumed the name of Diospolis (City of Zeus) about the time of Hadrian, and only gradually, through the lapse of centuries, regained its original name.

Forcing our way over vast quantities of segs or flags, and scarcely escaping the thorns of the prickly pear, we ascend the swelling hills and find ourselves among the ruins of 'Amwâs (the ancient Emmaus, afterwards called Nicopolis), with Latrôn in the distance (see page 152).

Emmaus is mentioned in the book of Maccabees, and also by F. Josephus as being a place of note in the time of the Asmoneans, and it was in sight of this city that Jonathan Maccabæus defeated the Syrian army. It must not, however, be confounded with Emmaus of Luke xxiv. 13, though Dr. Robinson was in favour of this supposition. (Refer to pages 198 *et seq.*, vol. i., where the subject of the site of Emmaus is fully treated.) 'Amwâs is now merely a squalid village with a ruined church. From here we can see the new carriage road winding up the highlands to Jerusalem.



THE PLAIN OF SHARON FROM THE TOWER, RAMLEH.

This tower, shown on page 144, was the minaret of a mosque called Jāmi'a el Abtad. It has a winding staircase of one hundred and twenty steps. Its eastern windows overlook the town of Ramleh and the plain beyond, bounded by the hills of Judæa.



SŪR'AH, THE ANCIENT ZORAH.

The birthplace of Samson. It is five miles south of Latrôn, on a conical hill on the north side of the Wâdy es Sūr'ar (the Valley of Sorek).

PHILISTIA.

THE term Philistia or Palestine (the "land of the stranger") has now, by some strange irony of fate, been assumed by all that portion of Canaan which was conquered and occupied by the children of Israel as the Promised Land.

It is probable that this has arisen from the fact that during the time of the Grecian

supremacy the Philistines were great in power and occupied the sea-board from Jaffa to Gaza, with the ports or *majumas* of Jabneh (see page 162), Ashdod (see page 165), Ascalon (see page 173), and Gaza (see page 175), and at one time even held the people of Israel in subjection, and would naturally assert themselves owners of the inland territory to those trading on their coasts. The land of the Philistines, at the time of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, extended from Ekron ('Akir) on the north to Gaza on the south (see map), from the sea-board on the west to the mountains on the east, and was usually called Shephelath, or the Low Country. At that time the Philistines appear to have been on very friendly terms with the Anakim of the mountains and with the other nations of Canaan, and to have joined them in withstanding the incursions of the Israelites. That the Philistines alone were successful in offering a continued and strenuous resistance, is probably due to their possession of horsemen and chariots, which they could use to advantage on the plains, and which their antagonists did not possess in any number.

The whole of Philistia was in those days highly cultivated and most productive, and was renowned for its vast unbroken expanses of luxuriant corn, and groves of fruit-trees and vineyards; and even to the present day the land still enjoys a reputation for productiveness, and exports corn to foreign countries, though its breadth of production is very much narrowed, for on the sea-board the drift sand has been allowed to encroach and cover the land for some miles inland, engulfing the site of many an ancient city. This encroachment of sand from the sea-shore is a most serious evil, and every year threatens more and more the fertile plain. Already many miles of rich country have been devoured by this insatiable monster, and there is no Perseus at hand to deliver Andromeda. Gaza (see page 175) and Ashdod (see page 165) are threatened and will in a few years be overcome, while their ancient ports have long since disappeared. The method of progress of this silent sea monster is plainly visible. The whole of the coast now consists of sand dunes sloping at an angle of ten degrees in the direction of the prevailing south-west wind, and presenting a slope of about thirty to thirty-five degrees to the north-east or on the leeward side, and when the prevailing wind is blowing the sand may be seen gently working up the windward incline, and, on arriving at the summit of the dune, swiftly falling to the bottom, from thence again to ascend another gentle slope, ever moving onwards towards the interior.

On the eastern side of Philistia another enemy has laid waste the country and destroyed its ancient fertility, for there the hills have been denuded of their soil until nothing is left but the bare rock; year after year the terraces supporting the vineyards and fruit-trees have been allowed to fall away, and the rich red loamy soil has been washed down until the hillsides are bare and desolate. At the bottoms of the valleys are still narrow slips of fertile ground, which yield in abundance, when they are not deluged by torrents from the unclothed hillsides or too greatly scorched by the glare from the overhanging rocks.

Philistia is not by any means the uniformly level tract it is generally supposed to be; it may be said to be divided into two portions: first, the undulating plains, about twelve miles

in breadth, bordering on the sea-coast, elevated from fifty to one hundred feet above the sea-level, and consisting of a series of undulations without distinctive features, composed of the richest alluvial deposit. Here were built and flourished Ekron, Jabneh (see page 162), Migdol (see page 167), Ashdod (see page 165), Ascalon (see page 169), and Gaza (see page 175), cities well fortified and situated on eminences, and dedicated to the worship of the ancient fish-gods. Between this undulating country and the mountains or hill country of Judah, is the hilly country of Philistia, stretching from north to south, and about twelve to fifteen miles wide. It consists of a series of hills and spurs from five hundred to eight hundred feet above the sea-level, broken through by broad valleys, and is distinct from the hill country of Judah, where the mountains rise to a height of two thousand to three thousand feet, and overhang Philistia. In this district, as has already been stated, the productive soil has been washed away with the terraces from the hillsides into the valleys, leaving vast extents of bare rock; but even yet the country is not abandoned, and the fellahin, when not too closely ground down under Turkish rule, carefully and successfully cultivate here and there the portions left uninjured (see page 160).

It is, in a great measure, due to the desolating rule of the nations which have held sway in Palestine for so many centuries, that we are enabled at the present time to recognise so many of the ancient sites mentioned in the books relating the conquest of the country by the Israelites, more than three thousand years ago.

Instead of being the "battle-field of nations," had this country existed for any lengthened period under a settled form of government and been allowed to develop its resources and prosper, it is probable that all records of the far-distant past would long ere this have been swept away; but, owing to the state of poverty in which the country has continued, very slight changes have taken place, with the exception of a general decay.

The descendants of the original inhabitants still linger about the ancient sites and ruins, and preserve their ancient traditions, so that it is practicable at the present day to go through the land, Bible in hand, and identify the places there mentioned. This is more especially the case with regard to places of minor importance, such as the ancient second-rate towns in Philistia, for very little has occurred to cause any change in their sites, while on the other hand the chief towns, such as Gath (see page 161), Ascalon (see page 169), and Gaza (see page 175), have been subject to many sieges, and to the usual fortunes of war. In many instances the stones of the ancient towns have been taken by the fellahin and burnt into lime (see page 184), or carried off to other sites, as in the case of Ascalon, whence many shiploads of cut and carved stones were taken for the rebuilding of 'Akka (see page 76) and Saida (see page 45); but, as a general rule, the remains of the cities are still to be found on the spot, covered with rubbish or built into the walls of the peasants' houses.

At the foot of the mountain-wall of Judah, just beyond the north-eastern extremity of the hills of Philistia, is still to be seen the site of Zorah, the birthplace of Samson, the son of Manoah. This place is now called Sūr'ah (see page 149); it is on the northern bank of the Wādy es Sūr'ar, the head of the river called Nahr Rubīn (see map).

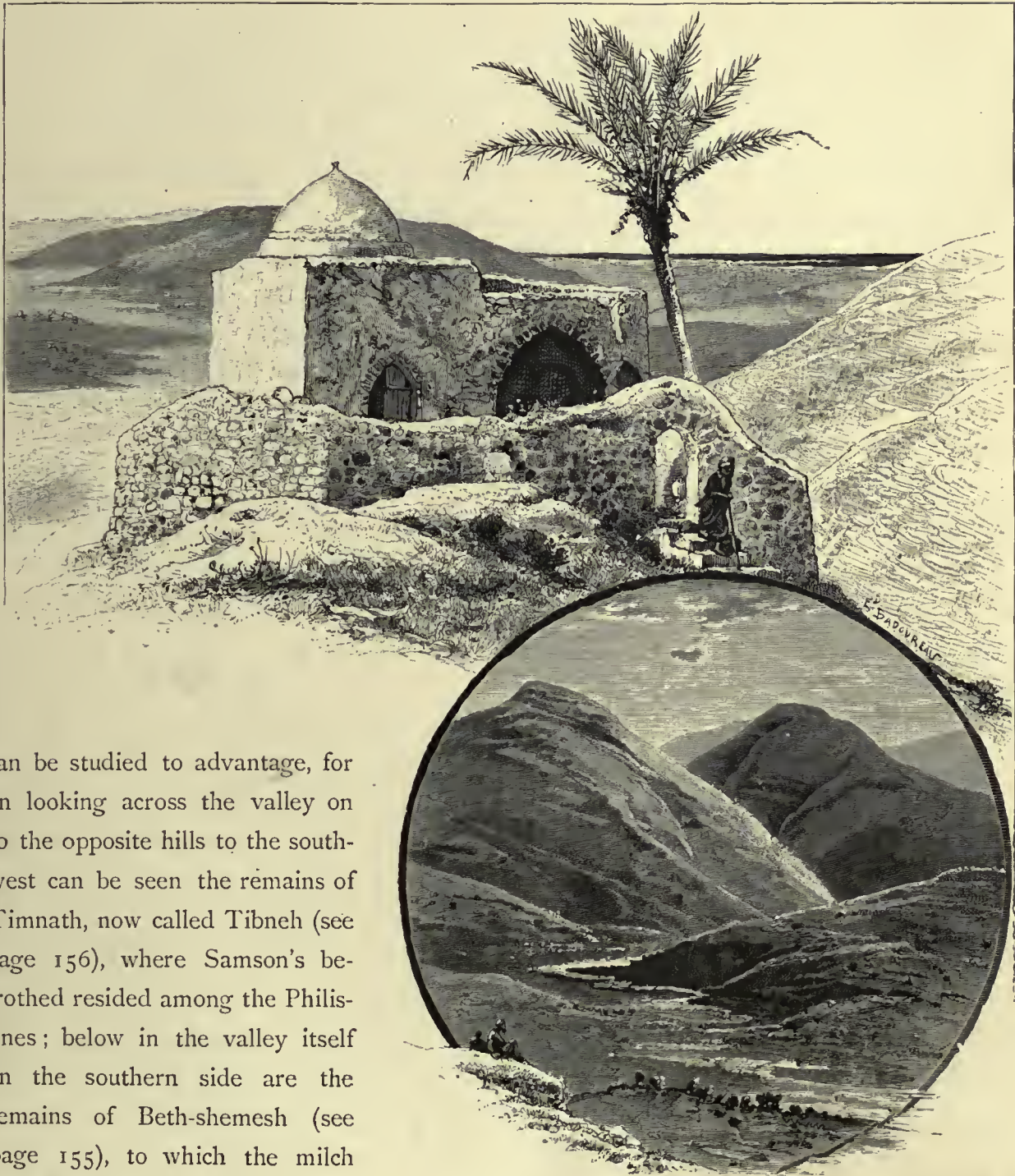


THE RUINED FORTRESS OF LATRÔN, FROM 'AMWÂS,

The Emmaus of the Maccabees, afterwards called Nicopolis. In the foreground are the remains of the ancient church of Emmaus. There is a direct road, running southwards, from Latrôn to Zorah (Sūr'ah), over hills dotted with ruined sites.

Zorah was well placed as an outlying post of the Israelites on the brow of a sharp-pointed conical hill overlooking the Valley of Sorek (Wâdy es Sūr'ar) towards the Philistines, and yet with a gentle slope on the north-east towards the cities of the tribes of Dan and Judah. It is at a height of eleven

hundred and seventy-one feet above the level of the sea, and commands a view of the opposite side of the valley, on which the Philistines were located and where they still owned the soil. From this central point of view at Sūr'ah (Zorah) the history of Samson and subsequent events



can be studied to advantage, for on looking across the valley on to the opposite hills to the south-west can be seen the remains of Timnath, now called Tibneh (see page 156), where Samson's betrothed resided among the Philistines; below in the valley itself on the southern side are the remains of Beth-shemesh (see page 155), to which the milch kine brought the ark in a cart from Ekron ('Akir), and on looking down the Valley of Sorek the

line can be traced up which the cart would have been drawn (see page 155). We find that Samson grew up to manhood in the country about Zorah and Eshtaol (Joshua xix. 41); that is

SHRINE OF SHEIKH SAMAT AT SŪR'AH (ZORAH).

On the summit of the hill. Below is shown the upper part of the Wādy es Sūr'ar (Valley of Sorek), which falls into the river called Nahr Rubin.

to say, about the sides and among the steep slopes and precipices of the mountains of Judah at a time when the Philistines had dominion over Israel. And he went from Zorah (Sūr'ah, see page 149) across the Valley of Sorek (Wâdy es Sūr'ar) to the opposite side, into the parts where the Philistines lived, to Timnath (Tibneh, see page 156), where he sought for his wife a daughter of the Philistines. And among the vineyards of Timnath a young lion roared against him, and Samson, who had nothing in his hand, rent him as he would have rent a kid. And as he returned he found a swarm of bees and honey in the skeleton of the lion, and put forth a riddle to his companions among the Philistines, who had come to feast with him. Through Samson's wife they ascertained the answer, and Samson's anger was kindled, and he went over the mountains to Askalon (see page 169), where he slew thirty Philistines in order to obtain garments with which to pay his wager; he then abandoned his wife and went up to Zorah (Sūr'ah, see page 149). Some time after, during wheat harvest, he prepared to visit his wife with a peace offering, but found that she was married to another. Then he determined to be revenged upon the Philistines, and caught three hundred foxes and tied them two and two, and put a firebrand in the midst. And when he had set the brands on fire he let the foxes go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives. The corn in Philistia at the time of harvest may be seen in unbroken expanses for many miles in extent, on the undulating plains and in the valleys, and on the terraces of the hills, and a conflagration once kindled would be most difficult to arrest. It would probably extend over all the land of Philistia, and reduce the people to starvation. The question naturally arises as to whether the people of Israel would have suffered from this act of Samson, but it will be noticed, on reference to a map representing Palestine at this period, that they lived entirely in the high lands, and would be exempt from this devastating calamity.

At the présent day during the harvest time the people are obliged to adopt the most stringent measures to prevent any accidental conflagration among the expanses of standing corn.

Our next detailed account relating to the southern part of Philistia is that concerning the journeys of the ark after it had fallen into the hands of the Philistines at Eben-ezer, near Aphek, when the sons of Eli were killed. And the ark was taken from the mountains about Eben-ezer down to Ashdod in the plains, and it was brought into the house of Dagon; and in the morning the people of Ashdod found that their god, Dagon, was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon and set him in his place again, and were much troubled about the matter. And on the following morning again Dagon was found to have fallen with his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord, and was broken, and the people of Ashdod (see page 165) and the surrounding district were smitten with emerods. And when the people saw that this was on account of the ark being among them, they summoned a council and decided that the ark should be taken across the plain to Gath (see page 161), at the foot of the hills. And the people of Gath suffered in like manner for

holding the ark in possession, therefore they sent the ark to Ekron; and the people of Ekron were afraid, for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city, and the hand of God was heavy on them. And after the ark had been seven months among the Philistines they called for their priests, asking them what they should do with it, and how they could get rid



'AIN SHEMS, THE SITE OF BETH-SHEMESH.

South of the Wādy es Sūr'ar (Sorek), and nearly opposite to Sūr'ah (Zorah). The ancient and modern names Beth-shemesh (House of the Sun) and 'Ain Shems (Eye of the Sun) are indicative of sun-worship.

of it. And they were told to make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there had come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart and take their calves home from them. And the Philistines did this, and took the ark in the cart with the milch kine out from Ekron ('Akīr) to a place where three roads met, and then left it. And the milch kine, instead of returning to



THE VALLEY OF SOREK.

Where the men of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest when the ark arrived from Ekron.

their calves or going on into the plain of Philistia, turned up the Valley of Sorek, and, passing between Timnath (see page 156) and Zorah (see page 149), arrived opposite to Beth-shemesh (1 Samuel vi. 12), on the south side of the valley, then in the hands of the Israelites. Now Beth-shemesh was a suburban city allotted to the children of Aaron. And the people were

reaping their wheat harvest in the valley, when they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark approach (see page 155). And the cart came into the field of Joshua, and the Levites among them set down the ark upon the great stone of Abel, and offered burnt offerings and sacrifices unto the Lord. Now the five lords of the Philistines had followed the ark until they arrived at the border of Beth-shemesh, and when they had seen the ark in possession of the Israelites they returned to Ekron ('Akir) the same day. And the people of Beth-shemesh suffered, as did the Philistines, because they looked into the ark of the Lord; and they sent



TIBNEH, THE SITE OF TIMNATH.

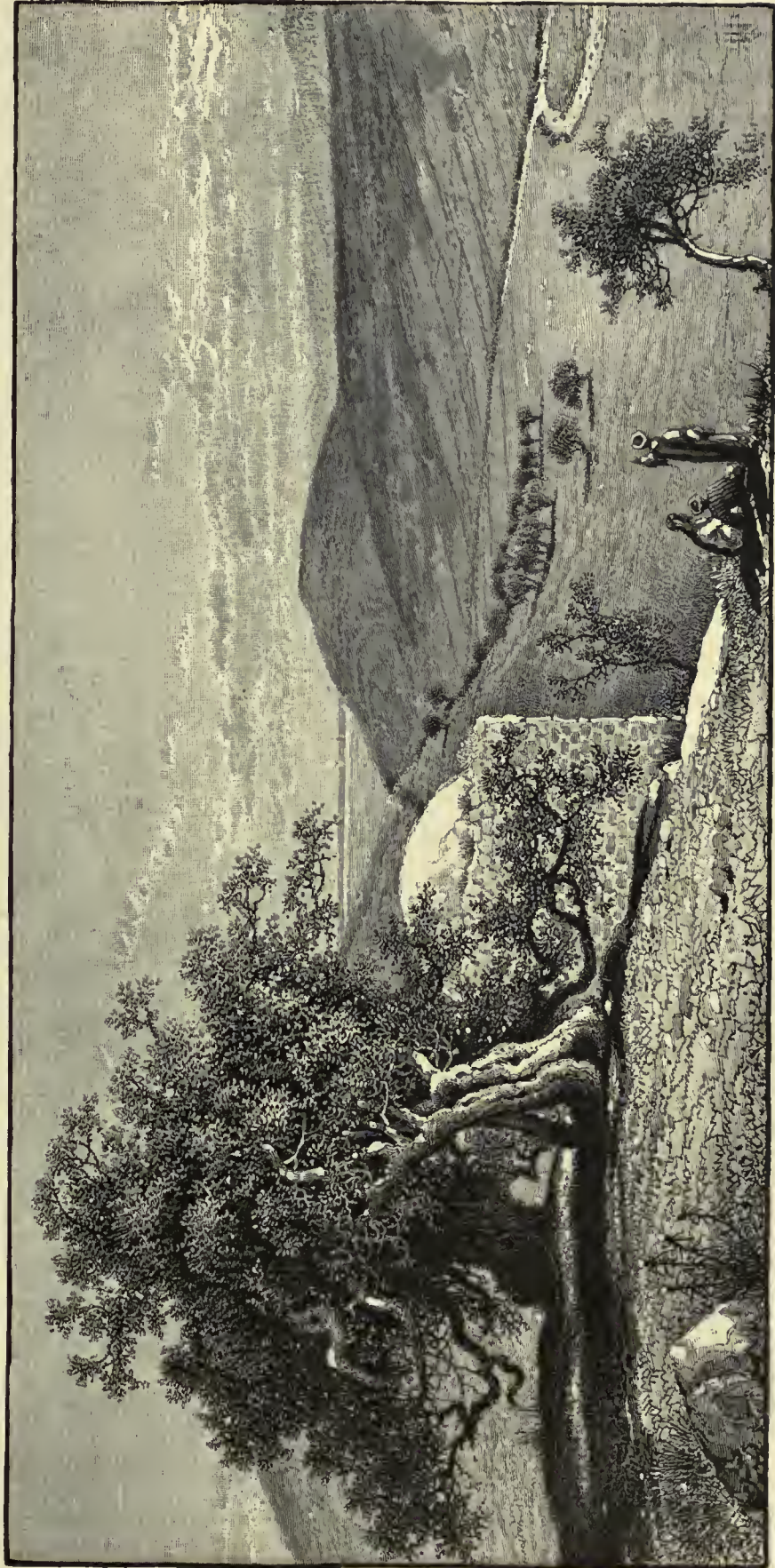
The home of Samson's wife, and the scene of his encounter with the young lion in the vineyard.



messengers to the people of Kirjath-jearim, which lay about ten miles farther to the east, in the mountains of Judah. And the men of Kirjath-jearim came and fetched up the ark of the Lord out of Beth-shemesh. Beth-shemesh was in after years the scene of a contest between Jehoash, King of Israel, and Amaziah, King of Judah, when the people of Judah were put to flight and their king taken prisoner (see 2 Kings xiv. 13, and Josephus, "Ant." chap. ix.). And afterwards, in the days of King Ahaz, it fell into the hands of the Philistines (2 Chronicles

xxviii. 18). It is now known under the name of 'Ain Shems, but there is no fountain to be found there at the present day (see page 155).

One of the most interesting incidents recorded in the early history of the Israelites in Palestine is the passage at arms between Goliath of Gath and the youthful David in the Valley of Elah. This valley, now recognised as Wâdy es Sûr or Es Sunt (see engraving), commences in the mountains of Judah, near Hebron (see page 192), and descending rapidly towards the north, divides them from the hills of Philistia to the west. After about ten miles it bends round to the west, and is here crossed by the main road leading from Gaza to Jerusalem; that road by which the Egyptians of ancient times gained the hill country, and by which the Bedawin of the present day make their forays upon the villages in the mountains. Hitherto it has been a somewhat broad valley, with parallel lines of hills on either side, but after passing Shocoh (Shuweikeh) on



WÂDY ES SUNT, THE VALLEY OF ELAH. The valley winds between the low hills, and enters the plain of Philistia opposite Tell es Sâfy.

the left (see page 159), it narrows considerably, and winds in and out through a somewhat narrow gorge for some miles until it enters the more open plain near Tell es Sâfy. This Valley of Elah (or the Terebinth) at the present day contains, near Shocoh (Shuweikeh), one of the largest terebinth-trees in Palestine, fifty-five feet in height, with a spread of shade seventy-five feet in diameter, and a trunk seventeen feet in circumference (see page 159). The bottom of this valley, near Shocoh, is a fine fertile plain, cultivated as corn-fields, and here it was that the encounter between David and Goliath took place, the Philistines standing on a mountain on one side, and Israel on a mountain on the other, with the valley between them. The people of Israel came down from the mountains and were to the north-east, while the Philistines concentrating from the plains were on the south-west, army against army in battle array. Gath, famous for its giants, had given to the Philistines a champion called Goliath, ten feet in height, clad in a coat of mail, with a helmet of brass, and the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and the spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. For forty days were these two armies face to face, and for forty days did Goliath call to the armies of Israel, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." And all Israel were greatly afraid, for a champion who could cope with Goliath was unknown (1. Samuel xvii.).

While the people of Israel were "dismayed and greatly afraid," there arrived in camp the youthful David, who, when he had heard of the challenge of Goliath, asked what should be done for the man who killed the Philistine, and took away the reproach from Israel, and was told in reply that the king would enrich him and give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel. And David was brought before Saul and offered to fight with the Philistine. Now in this personal combat, thus contemplated, there was not only the danger to the life of David to be considered, but also to the whole people of Israel, for if the Philistine conquered they were to be servants to the Philistines. The consequences were, therefore, so momentous that Saul required a pledge as to David's ability and prowess. David recounted his adventures with a lion and a bear, in each of which combats he was victorious, and Saul admitted his claim to act as champion, and bid him go against the Philistine. This circumstance shows clearly that the people of Israel were on the verge of a panic, on the point of giving in, otherwise they would not have so desperately adventured their safety to a comparatively unknown champion, to a youth totally unversed in the arts of war; but it also shows us something more—they permitted David to go to the encounter without armour, and knew that he was about to enter the lists trusting in the assistance of the God of Israel. It is clear from this that the people as a body still thoroughly believed in their God, and trusted to David as His instrument:—"And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, and slew him. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled; and the Israelites pursued them even to Gath and Ekron, and spoiled their tents." At the present day the account of this victory of David can be read and studied on the spot, and all the incidents realised; for the ancient sites are still in existence, and

the habits of the people are as in former days. It is not unusual at the present day to meet



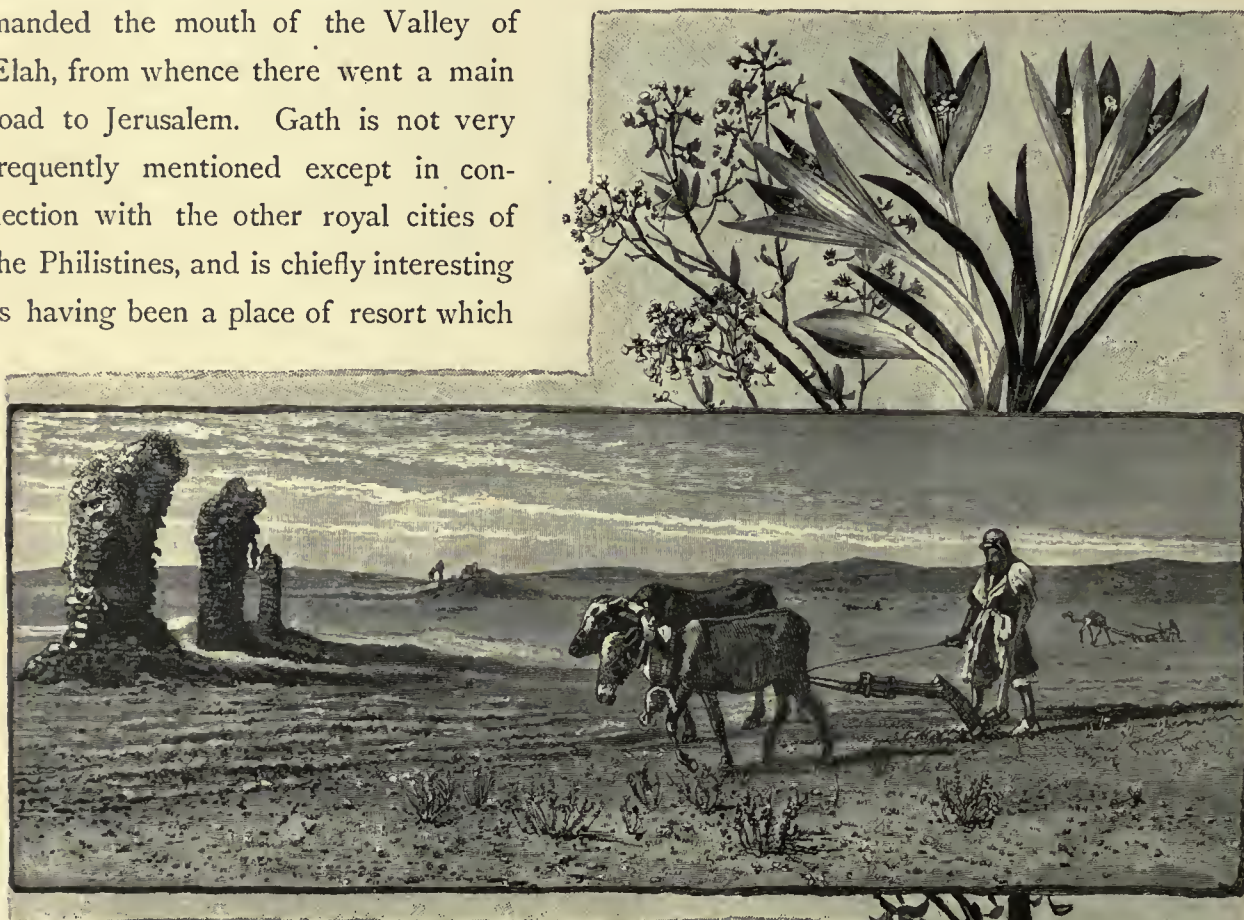
SHOCOH, THE CAMP OF THE PHILISTINES.

This site, now called Shuweikeh, is marked by extensive ruins, large terebinth-trees, and a Muhammedan shrine dedicated to Sheikh Abû Heïâl.

with shepherds so skilful with their slings that they can easily bring down birds at a distance of several yards.

The royal city of Gath (see page 161) is generally admitted to have stood on the

conspicuous hill now called Tell es Sâfy, on which was built the important fortress of Blanchegarde by King Fulke during the Crusades (see page 161). It lies about sixteen miles from the seashore, and is situated on the extremity of one of the spurs of the hills of Philistia, as they melt down into the undulating plains. It obtained the name of Alba Specula during the Middle Ages on account of the glaring white chalk cliff or scarp which surrounds it, and which is most conspicuous for many miles to the south-west. It was a most important stronghold of the Philistines, and commanded the mouth of the Valley of Elah, from whence there went a main road to Jerusalem. Gath is not very frequently mentioned except in connection with the other royal cities of the Philistines, and is chiefly interesting as having been a place of resort which



PLOUGHING IN THE PLAINS OF PHILISTIA,
In the neighbourhood of Tell es Sâfy. Ploughing and sowing for winter crops extends from the end of November to the middle of January, or later.

King David frequented during his troubles ; here out of fear of Achish "he feigned himself mad, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate ;" and here again, some years later, he was received

with honour by the Philistine king, and again out of Gath came one of David's most faithful of followers and firmest of friends, Ittai the Gittite (2 Samuel xv. 19—23). When Gath was rebuilt under the name of Blanchegarde, it played a most important part in the wars of the Crusades, and was witness to some of the chief adventures of Richard Plantagenet with the Saracens who infested the plain. The hill on which the city stood is about two hundred feet above the surrounding plain, and is of an irregular shape. A modern wely rests on the highest level, and around are the remains of the ruined castle, and some large stones forming



portions of the terraces which cover the hill. It appears in a great measure to have been scarp'd all round, though the rubbish from the ruins has fallen over and covered up the old fortifications (see engraving). Here, as in many adjoining villages, there are extensive well-cut cisterns; the vines still grow luxuriantly on the terraces and the olive-trees on the hillsides. In the valley and on the plain around are tracts of corn-fields stretching as far as the eye can reach, and in the middle of June all the people are in the fields bringing in the corn to the threshing-floors (see page 160).

Passing over the swelling plains of Philistia, at about



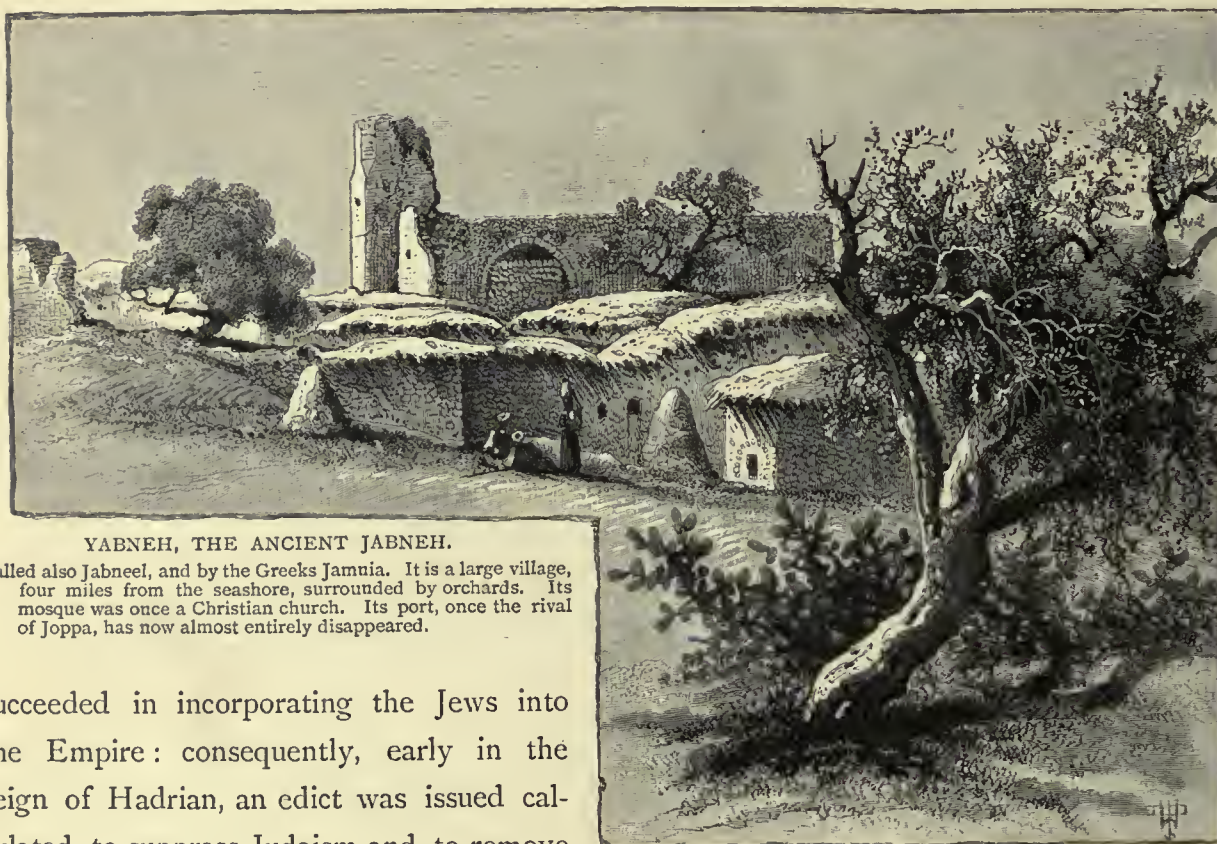
TELL ES SÂFY, THE SUPPOSED SITE OF GATH.

An isolated hill of irregular form sixteen miles from the seashore. A shrine dedicated to El Khudr (St. George) stands on its highest point, six hundred and ninety-three feet above the sea. The Roman road runs north and south on the eastern side of the Tell.

eighteen miles to the north-west of the city of Gath we arrive at the site of the ancient Jabneh (see page 162), a town of the Philistines, situated on a slight eminence on the west bank of the Valley of Sorek (Wâdy es Sûr'ar), about four miles from the sea-coast. It is now called Yabneh. This city is mentioned as having been taken by assault and its wall broken down by the forces under Uzziah, King of Judah, and it is subsequently spoken of as a fenced city by F. Josephus; but it did not prominently come into notice until just before the great siege of Jerusalem by Titus, when it became the residence of many of the members of the Sanhedrin, and during the first and second centuries of our era was famous as the great theological and legal seminary of the Jews. The Sanhedrin had previously assembled in the Chamber (Gazith) of the Court

of Israel, in the Temple at Jerusalem, but at the time of the siege by Titus its members were permitted by him to proceed to Jabneh, under Gamaliel, their Nasi, A.D. 70. This school, after the demolition of the Temple, obtained great authority over the Jews who were left in Palestine, owing to the rank and position of the learned Gamaliel and other members of the Sanhedrin located there, and in a large measure served to prevent the extinction of the Jews as a nation, and to keep in their minds the prospect of the Messiah's advent.

The influence of the Rabbins over the minds of the people was at this time complete, not only in the religious services and in the superintendence of education, but also in all matters connected with domestic life. The Romans felt this, and realised that they had not yet



YABNEH, THE ANCIENT JABNEH.

Called also Jabneel, and by the Greeks Jamnia. It is a large village, four miles from the seashore, surrounded by orchards. Its mosque was once a Christian church. Its port, once the rival of Joppa, has now almost entirely disappeared.

succeeded in incorporating the Jews into the Empire: consequently, early in the reign of Hadrian, an edict was issued calculated to suppress Judaism and to remove all power out of the hands of the Rabbins.

The rites and existing ceremonies of the Jews were interdicted, and it was declared that Jerusalem should be established as a Roman colony, and the site of its Holy Place adorned with a temple dedicated to Jupiter.

The Rabbins of Jabneh (Yabneh) saw on the one hand entire annihilation of their schools, and consequently of the national life of the Jews; on the other hand, they kept in view the prospect of success in a sanguinary struggle with the Romans. With great astuteness they seized upon this moment for the proclamation of the advent of the long-looked-for Messiah. The star that should "arise out of Jacob" was at hand, who should govern the Jews with great power and majesty. His name, Barcochaba (the Son of a Star), fulfilled the prophecy. He was a man of considerable force of character, and the great and learned Rabbi

Akiba acknowledged him as the Messiah. The revolt commenced in A.D. 130. Jews flocked to his standard from all parts of the world; the whole Hebrew race was in a state of ferment at the news of his advent. Barcochaba advanced against the Romans at the head of a large body of insurgents, and at first was constantly successful; he even captured Jerusalem, and held it for the space of three years. It is said that he was at the head of an army of two hundred thousand fighting men, and though this is probably an exaggeration, it is worthy of note that Strabo states that so great was the population about Jabneh, that this district in his time could furnish forty thousand fighting men. It is not necessary to follow the fortunes of Barcochaba, and to watch how quickly the star of this false Messiah set for ever, until even his name was changed by his aggrieved and despairing countrymen to that of Barcosba (the Son of a Lie).

At the termination of this unsuccessful revolt the whole of the Rabbins of Jabneh were barbarously persecuted by the Romans, as the ringleaders of the insurrection, and were forbidden to fill up the vacancies in the Sanhedrin, an order which they managed to evade. After the death of Hadrian, and on the accession of the gentle Antoninus, the Rabbins were emboldened to re-establish their synagogues and to re-open the school at Jabneh (Jamnia), but in consequence of the indiscretion of the rabbi Simon Ben Jochai, in speaking evil of the Roman authorities, the school was suppressed and the Sanhedrin wandered to other places in Palestine. Benjamin of Tudela asserts that even in his day (A.D. 1163), the site of these schools could still be traced. During the time of the Crusades a fort was here established called Ibelin, the site being admirably adapted for a work of defence.

Jabneh became the site of a bishopric, and its mediæval church is now converted into a Muhammedan mosque (see page 162). This ancient site (called by the Arabs Yabneh) is now occupied by a flourishing town, numbering about two thousand inhabitants, principally Muhammedans, and on the coast, at a distance of four miles, is still to be seen the remains of the ancient port, or Maju-ma, of Jabneh, mentioned by Pliny. If we turn to the south from this port and traverse the sea-coast there is little of interest for some miles. The rich lands of Philistia for three to four miles inland are covered to a depth of thirty to forty feet with ever-increasing heights of sand dunes, blown eastward by the sea breeze, and threatening ere long to engulf the whole lowland districts if steps are not taken to obviate the growing evil. It is a truly melancholy sight, when travelling over this once densely populated country, to find little remaining save here and there a fellah's solitary hut, surrounded by walls of sand which have from day to day to be battled and wrestled with. With wonderful tenacity of purpose these fellahin continue the struggle until at last they are driven out of the inheritance of their forefathers. In some cases the sand has so far got the upper hand that nothing is left of the cultivated lands, the most strenuous labour being only sufficient to preserve a few remaining fruit trees from the general destruction. These are to be seen each at the bottom of a crater of sand, laden with delicious fruit.

After proceeding about eleven miles along the coast a sandstone town or barrack is met

with, which probably marks the ancient site of the port of Ashdod, of which nothing now is visible ; and about five miles farther to the south the low line of coast is seen to develop into a bold cliff, which increases in picturesqueness as it is approached, and on which are the remains of "Ascalon by the Sea" (see page 173). But here we turn off to view the modern Mejdol, identified as *Migdol* (see page 167), Gad of the Philistines, and even as Magdala, mentioned by Herodotus (xi. 159), when Pharaoh-Neco engaged the Syrians by land and conquered them. Mejdol is now the site of the government of the district about Ascalon, and is a flourishing country town. It possesses a mosque with a tall minaret, large stone houses, and a bazaar. It is surrounded by groves of large olive-trees, and undulating plains covered with cereals, interspersed with palm, walnut, and fig trees. The soil around is very rich, and the people are industrious, watering their crops from deep wells, in some of which the water is one hundred and twenty feet below the surface. In many instances the wells are common to the whole village. The water is brought to the surface by means of a "Persian wheel" or "naura," which is worked by camels or oxen, provided in turn by the various heads of families (identical with the "sâkiyeh," see pages 81 and 132).

Not far from Mejdol is the site of Ascalon (see page 169), whose general position is well known, but the exact site of which has not as yet been identified. It was one of the royal cities of the Philistines when the children of Israel entered the Promised Land, and remained in the hands of the Philistines until the time of the Jewish captivity. Ascalon is described by Herodotus as having possessed the most ancient of all the temples erected to Venus, or Derceto, the mother of Semiramis. She was represented as a woman above the waist, with termination in shape of a fish-tail, a female counterpart to Dagon. Ascalon, like other towns of the Philistines, had its seaport, now called "Ascalon by the Sea." This town came prominently into notice in the time of Herod the Great, who adorned it with public baths and fountains and palaces ; here his sister Salome resided.* During the wars of the Jews with the Romans, the former suffered a great defeat here at the hand of Antonius.

At an early period Ascalon was made the seat of a bishopric, and owing to its advantageous position and strong walls it became the most important fortress in Palestine during the Middle Ages, and during the Crusades was a thorn in the side of the Christians, as it had been to the Jews when in possession of the Philistines. It was around Ascalon that the great battle took place between the Egyptian army and the Crusaders under Godfrey. Godfrey of Lorraine, after the capture of Jerusalem, was just elected King by the army of the Crusaders, when intelligence arrived that a vast army of Egyptians had crossed the desert into Palestine, to annihilate the Christians and raise again the standard of Islam. Hurriedly the Christian army was assembled and collected in battle array near Ramleh, prepared to dispute the passage of the Egyptian invaders (see page 148). Raymond took up a

* In the year 1815, Lady Hester Stanhope having procured a firman from the Turkish authorities, instituted a search for antiquities among the ruins of 'Askulan (Ascalon). Among other objects then brought to light was a colossal statue of a Roman emperor, probably one of Augustus erected by Herod. Unfortunately it was broken to pieces by the excited workpeople, who apparently expected to find some wonderful treasure concealed within it.—M. E. R.



ESHDO'D, THE ANCIENT ASHDOD.

Called by the Greeks Azotus. The modern village stands on the slope of a hill, one hundred and forty feet above the sea, and three miles from the shore. The green knoll in the foreground is crowned by the wely of Sheikh Ibrahim el Matbûk.

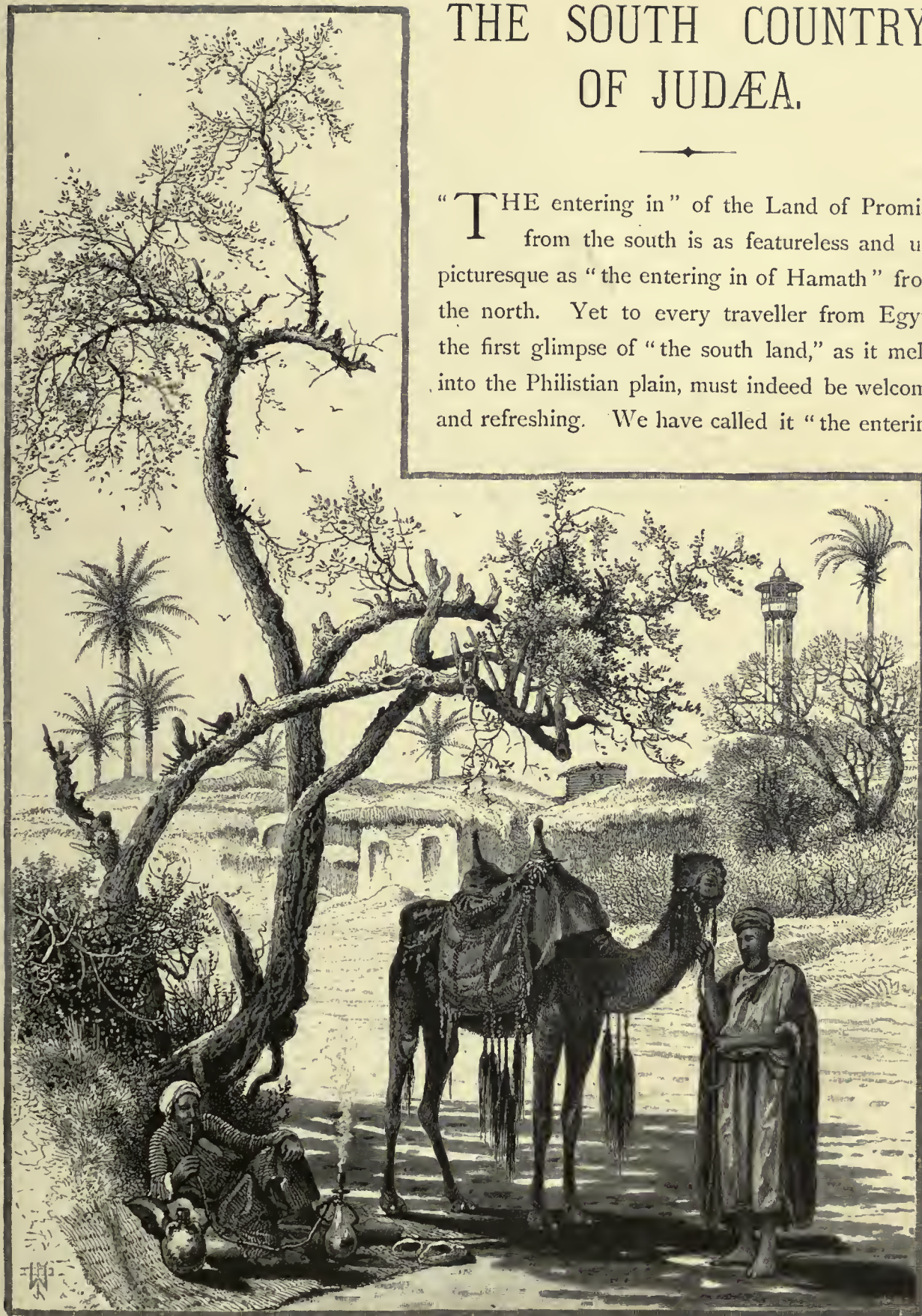
position on the sea-coast, Godfrey invested Ascalon with five thousand cavalry and infantry, while Tancred and the two Roberts directed the attack upon the enemy. Gallantly the Christians charged their swarthy antagonists, who exceeded them greatly in numbers. It is related that large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle accompanied the Christians from the mountains, and these were mistaken by the Muhammedans for the Christian reserve forces, apparently so numerous that when the first collision took place a panic arose among them and they fled in all directions, hotly pursued by the Christians. Some fled to the seashore and were there put to death by Raymond, while others perished in the desert. One portion attempted to escape into Ascalon, but were intercepted by Godfrey and killed. On the destruction of this vast army Godfrey now laid siege to Ascalon, but was in a short time obliged to raise the siege again in consequence of the quarrels among his knights, and Ascalon still remained in the hands of the Muhammedans, a standing menace to Jerusalem.

In A.D. 1124 the Muhammedans made an ineffectual raid from Ascalon upon Jerusalem, while the Christians were endeavouring to subdue Tyre. It was not until A.D. 1153 that Ascalon was taken from the Muhammedans. Then Baldwin III. laid siege to it, determined to capture it at all hazards; he completely invested the fortress both by sea and land, and for two months carried on extensive siege operations. During this period he omitted to observe the Easter festival, and ordered all the pilgrims in the land to hasten to the assistance of the investing army. The Muhammedans defended the walls with the utmost gallantry, and when at last they were obliged to submit they were enabled to make their own terms and march out of the fortress with all the honours of war.

In a few years the cause of Christendom languished, and under the leadership of the Sultan Saladin the followers of Islam recaptured many of the cities of Syria. Among others Ascalon was the last to capitulate previous to the march of the Muhammedans upon Jerusalem (A.D. 1187). In 1190 Saladin determined to destroy the fortifications of Ascalon, lest it should again fall into the hands of the Christians; accordingly, under his directions, this magnificent fortress became in a short time a heap of ruins (see page 169). During the Third Crusade the walls of Ascalon were rebuilt by the Christians, in which work Richard Plantagenet took a special interest, part of the expenses being defrayed by a subscription from the ladies of England. In the year 1270 the walls were again totally destroyed by the Sultan Bibars. The walls of Ascalon are still standing in places (see page 173), but they are of small-sized pieces of indurated sandstone; here and there may be seen remains of the massive blocks which formed the old walls, which for the most part have been carried away for the building of other sites. Columns of granite, seventeen to eighteen feet in length and two and a half feet in diameter, are to be seen projecting from the faces of the walls. Ascalon is still used as a seaport in a small way (see page 172), and exports bones and pottery. The neighbourhood is very fertile; groups of palm-trees give a picturesque aspect to the place (see page 169). Vines, olives, and many kinds of fruit, including apples, are cultivated by the inhabitants of El Jûrah, a small village north-east of the group of ruins now called 'Askûlân.

THE SOUTH COUNTRY OF JUDÆA.

“THE entering in” of the Land of Promise from the south is as featureless and unpicturesque as “the entering in of Hamath” from the north. Yet to every traveller from Egypt the first glimpse of “the south land,” as it melts into the Philistian plain, must indeed be welcome and refreshing. We have called it “the entering



EL MEJDEL, THE ANCIENT MIGDOL.

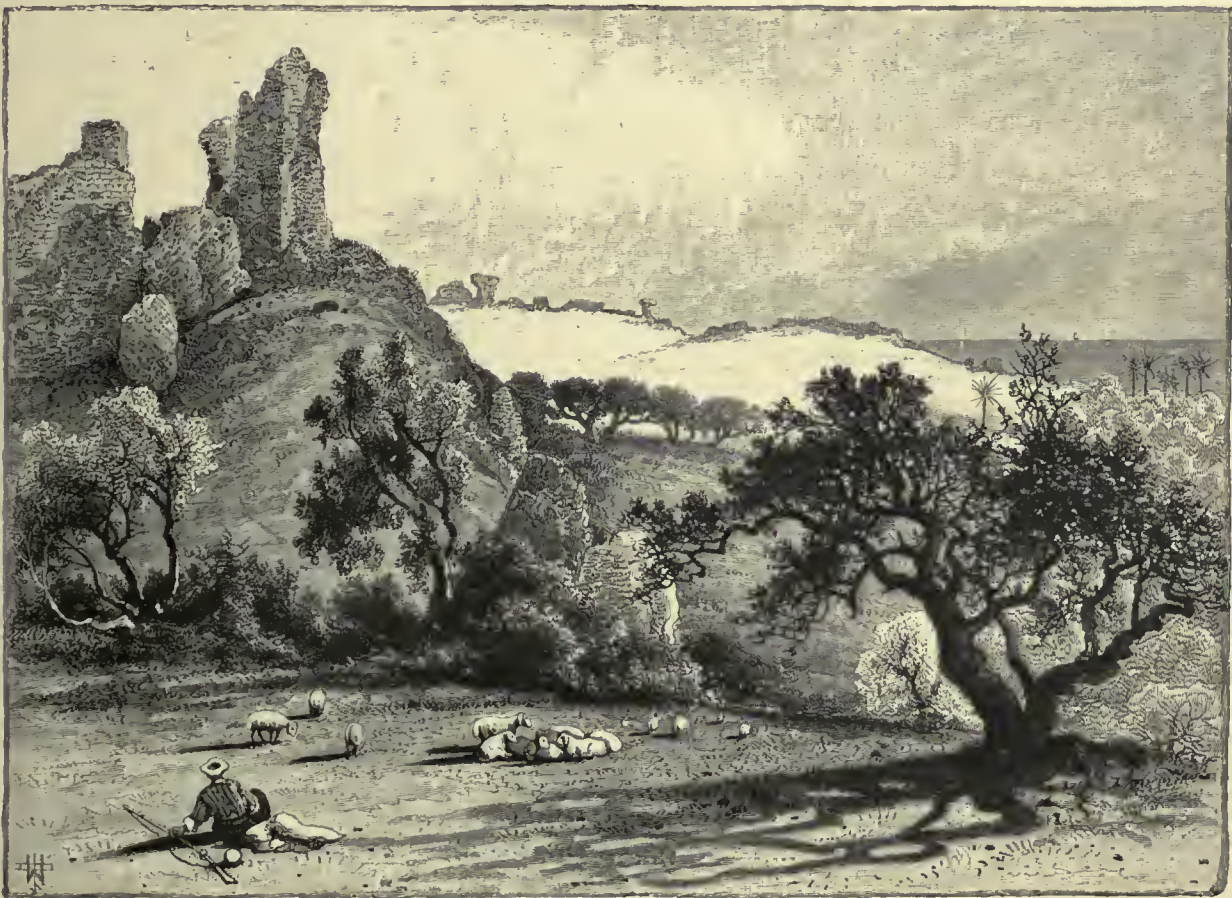
An important village of fifteen hundred inhabitants. Its mosque and tall minaret are constructed of ancient materials. A weekly fair is held here.

in," and so for ages it has been: the route taken alike by warriors and merchants, the gate of the thoroughfare between Egypt and Assyria, the rival empires of the East. Before the introduction of steamers few travellers entered Palestine by any other road, save those who undertook the *long* desert journey by Sinai and Petra. From the Nile to Wâdy el Arish is a dreary desert journey of nine days, but now we have entered the boundary of Simeon, and a few villages surrounded by palm and olive trees near the shore are gratefully refreshing to the eye, while scanty verdure takes the place of sandy wastes. When we have reached the last of these villages, Deir el Belah, the "convent of the dates," we are in the true pastoral country of the patriarchs. The country is broken up by frequent wâdys and rounded hills, few showing any cliffs or rocks, but all covered with turf, chequered by wide unfenced tracts of cornland, and dotted with many a black encampment of Bedawin. The common notion that this southern region is desert is at once dispelled. But covered though it be with countless flocks, not a tree relieves the monotony of the green expanse, and it is doubtful if this district was ever wooded as the inland region east of Beersheba (see page 209) certainly was in early ages. Most of the streams are dry in summer, and the dependence of the Arabs is on wells, always carefully concealed, and seldom known except to the tribe which claims the pasturage. Three hours south-east of Gaza (see page 175), and two hours to the east of the road from Egypt, is a featureless low ridge, rising north of a shallow valley, and commanding a wide view on all sides, which claims a visit from its historical associations. The Bedawin have no tradition respecting it, but its name has come down unchanged for four thousand years, Jerar, the Gerar of Genesis, the favourite camping-place of the patriarch Isaac. Four miles before reaching the Wâdy Guzzeh, as the combined watercourses of the Wâdy es Seba, or Valley of Beersheba, and the more northern Wâdy Sheriar are called, we leave the caravan road ten miles south of Gaza and strike east over what seems a boundless expanse of rolling treeless downs. Crossing the Wâdy es Seba and then the Sheriar, in both of which a copious stream was flowing at the beginning of February, we rode on, sometimes on turf brilliant with a mass of scarlet anemones, sometimes over plots of young wheat painted with various yellow flowers, till we reached the flat-topped mound, or "tell," commanding a splendid view from Beersheba eastward, to the sea on the west—Abu Jerar. Wells are its only visible ruins. The turf is scarcely broken by faint traces of foundations, and the soil is full of fragments of coarse pottery, certain indications of a former extensive occupation. The wells stud the top and sides of the hill down to the bottom of the valley. All are more or less filled in, some of them even with the surface—perhaps the wells of Abraham, choked by Abimelech's herdsmen. Some were filled only up to a depth of twelve or twenty feet, showing the lower part cut in the rock and the upper portion cemented; evidently later work, as the cement has many fragments of pottery in it. Many were roofed with low cupolas of very small masonry with a hole in the centre. Only two of them are perfect, the others being more or less broken in. We found water in two only of nineteen wells which we examined. Many of them seem to have been purposely filled in and utilised, after they were cemented, as storehouses by the Bedawin. The hill must have

been an admirable look-out station whence Isaac could watch his flocks and servants. There are traces of the foundations of a keep, but this is evidently later work.

The ride across the downs from Jerar to Gaza (see page 175), though without grand scenery, is full of interest. The district abounds in wild animals. The gazelles may be seen bounding on every hill. The fox and the jackal start up at every turn, and one long ridge is a favourite resort of the great grey crane, which returns year by year in hundreds to its quarters, like rooks to their trees.

Gaza, or rather the olive-groves which gird it, bursts suddenly upon us (see page 175). It



RUINS OF ASCALON, FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

Here there are fine orchards and olive-trees, cultivated by the Egyptian peasants of the neighbouring village of El Jûrah. The wild onions of 'Askûlân are celebrated for their delicate flavour. The Romans gave them the name of Ascalonia, hence *scalogna* (Ital.) and shallot (*Allium Ascalonicum*).

has no natural advantages of situation, and there is no reason apparent why it should have been a city from the earliest times. It is now entirely denuded of fortifications or walls, and many of its streets straggle out into the open country. A broad sand road opens among the olive-trees, the highway of Egypt and Syria, trodden by Midianites and camels long before Abraham, by Egyptian and Assyrian kings, by Greek and Roman conquerors, by Saracens and Crusaders, and lastly by Napoleon from Egypt and back again. Gaza has over twenty thousand inhabitants. The central town, stone-built, is girt by wide suburbs of mud-built turf-covered houses, over which rise in numbers the minarets, shining white above the grass-

clad roofs, and many an isolated palm rivalling them, among which the telegraph wires shoot straight across the city—a strange mingling of new and old. There is only one hill near which can claim the name, and this is crowned by a shrine called 'Aly el Muntâr. It is south-east of the town, of which it commands a fine view, and the traditional spot to which Samson carried the gates; and may very well be so, as it is the only hill near, and is on the road to Hebron. We are shown not only this, but also the site of the Philistine gateway, of Dagon's temple, and of Samson's death! There is very little of historic interest in the buildings of Gaza. The Mosque of Hâshim, Muhammed's grandfather, is entirely of Saracenic architecture, and very ancient. We are shown the tomb of Hâshim in one corner of the cloister. But the great mosque, over which is an Arabic inscription giving the date of the Hegira 677, or A.D. 1276, is in reality the Basilica of Helena, a noble cathedral, with its three apses partially built up, and one of them made the staircase to the added minaret. The nave and aisles are unaltered, and on the columns the cross and other Christian symbols remain unerased. A second south aisle has been added by the Muhammedans, communicating with a college of dervishes adjoining (see page 175).

All the other buildings of Gaza are very poor, streets and bazaars filthy beyond description and winding between irregular flat-roofed houses. But the striking feature of Gaza is the quantity of marble relics everywhere. It rivals Ascalon (see page 173) in this abundance of columns. They are dug up in every yard and garden, and they form every threshold and most of the lintels. From the narrow street you step over a puddle on to a marble column lying across a doorway. You pass through a stable, then into a narrow court, on one side of which is the kitchen, open in front. Then by a passage into the inner courtyard, large and paved with marble fragments, the open arcaded rooms on each side of it flanked by marble columns, dug up on the premises, with capitals Corinthian, Herodian, or Late Byzantine, the relics of church and temple together. Polished slabs of marble vary the walls, built in along with Roman stones. Such is the Gazan imitation of a Damascus palace. There have been many statues found here, and very recently a fine colossus was exhumed and sent to the new national collection at Constantinople.

The environs of Gaza on the north side are far more extensive than on the south. For miles the park-like olive forest extends, the trees old, weird, gnarled, and of the quaintest shapes, with cattle grazing everywhere under their shade. Beyond the trees the road towards Hebron leads across the widest part of the great Philistian plain. The country is now all carefully cultivated, though twenty-five years ago it was a neglected waste of wild herbage, and is studded with olive-girt villages. Here and there a winter torrent has cut its way through the rich loam of the level plain, and it is no easy task to find a spot where the horses can descend and cross to the opposite bank. After a ride of fifteen miles the ground becomes more undulating, bare but rich downs take the place of the luxuriant plain, and not a habitation can be seen on any side. Lachish, the modern Lakis, is the first historic spot we reach. It is indeed a desolate heap. Low spurs from the Judæan hills very gradually





H. FENN, PINX.

A WILLMORE, SCULPT.

GAZA.



push forward into the Philistian plain. Between two of these spurs we ride, and on our left is a low "tell," with stones strewn about in all directions. This is all that is left of Lachish. The hill seems almost formed of broken pottery, which covers the ground like gravel. A few half-choked wells and lines of foundations of very thick walls are all that is left to tell of the city, whose capture forms the chief feature of Sennacherib's slabs. There the city is represented as surrounded by palm-trees. Now not a tree or a shrub remains for miles distant. Commanding the country around, and secure by its situation from surprise, the farthest elevation projecting into the plain, it is the natural position for a frontier outpost fortress.

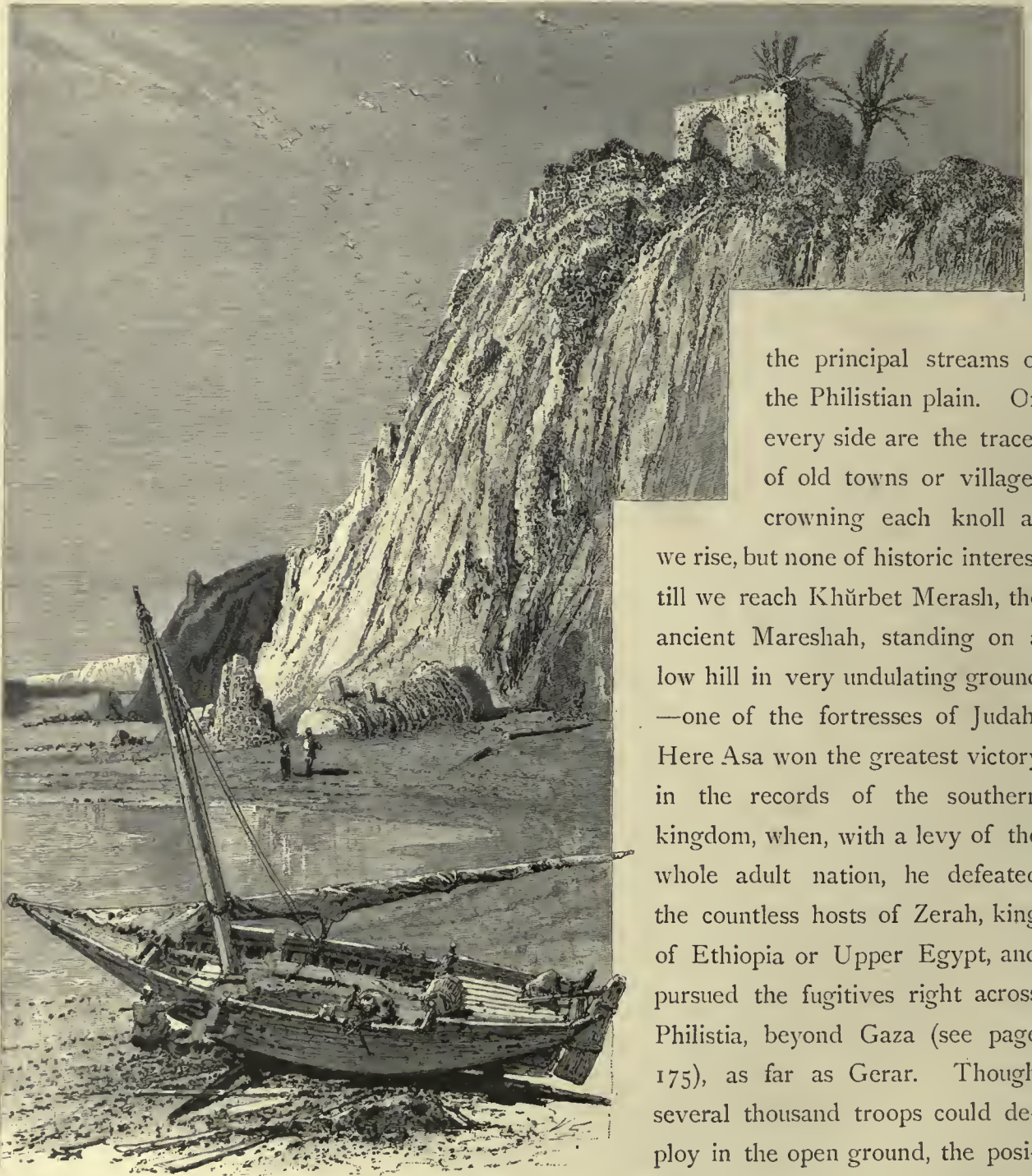
Three miles farther on, on a similar "tell," we reach Ajlân, the ancient Eglon, a simple repetition of Lachish, but much better preserved. The whole enceinte of the keep can be easily traced, now a field of onions protected by a cactus hedge. Several wells and an old cistern remain, and some excavations, recently made, have brought to light some fine substructures of dressed stone, attesting its former importance.

Two hours' ride from Eglon, across a level plain, brings us to Arak el Menshiyeh, the ancient Libnah. A wide valley from the south winds round the spur of Eglon, and we are soon on a rich corn plain again. Far ahead we can see an isolated rock, with a white wely in one corner, standing up out of the plain, and a large mud village at its foot. This is Libnah. Just to the north-east of the village, separated from it by a narrow stream, close by which are several ancient wells, with fragments of sculptured marble strewn around, and surmounted by the rude and cumbrous apparatus for lifting the water, such as we see in Egypt, rises the rock Arak el Menshiyeh, on which was the citadel of the Jewish town. It had originally been a completely isolated rock, intended by nature for a fortress, absolutely impregnable before the introduction of firearms. Its perpendicular sides stand out from the plain without the slightest connection with any neighbouring ridge, and about one hundred feet high. The old rubbish of former buildings has been thrown down the south side, and forms a steep slope, by which we climb to the top. This is perfectly flat, about four acres in extent, and utterly deserted, forming a fig orchard surrounded by a cactus hedge. The panorama all around for miles is unbroken. The whole plain is corn or pasture, not a shrub or tree, not a house, not a feature to break the green expanse, save here and there a Bedawin encampment, with fires beginning to twinkle in the distance as the shades of evening creep on. It is an impressive sight, and we can picture how the host of the Assyrians marched from the distant ridge of Lachish and were spread over this wide plain, and how impossible was the capture of this place, even by such an army, otherwise than by starvation. Hence the beleaguered garrison looked down on the plain to the west and saw the whole strewn with the thousands of corpses smitten by the angel of the Lord :

" For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed on the face of the foe as he passed,
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever were still."

From Arak el Menshiyeh the route to Beit Jibrin (see page 180) is for the most part

lonely and deserted. We soon leave the rich plain and begin to ascend the spurs of the Judæan hills, where many a little winter torrent runs down to feed the Nahr Sukereir, one of



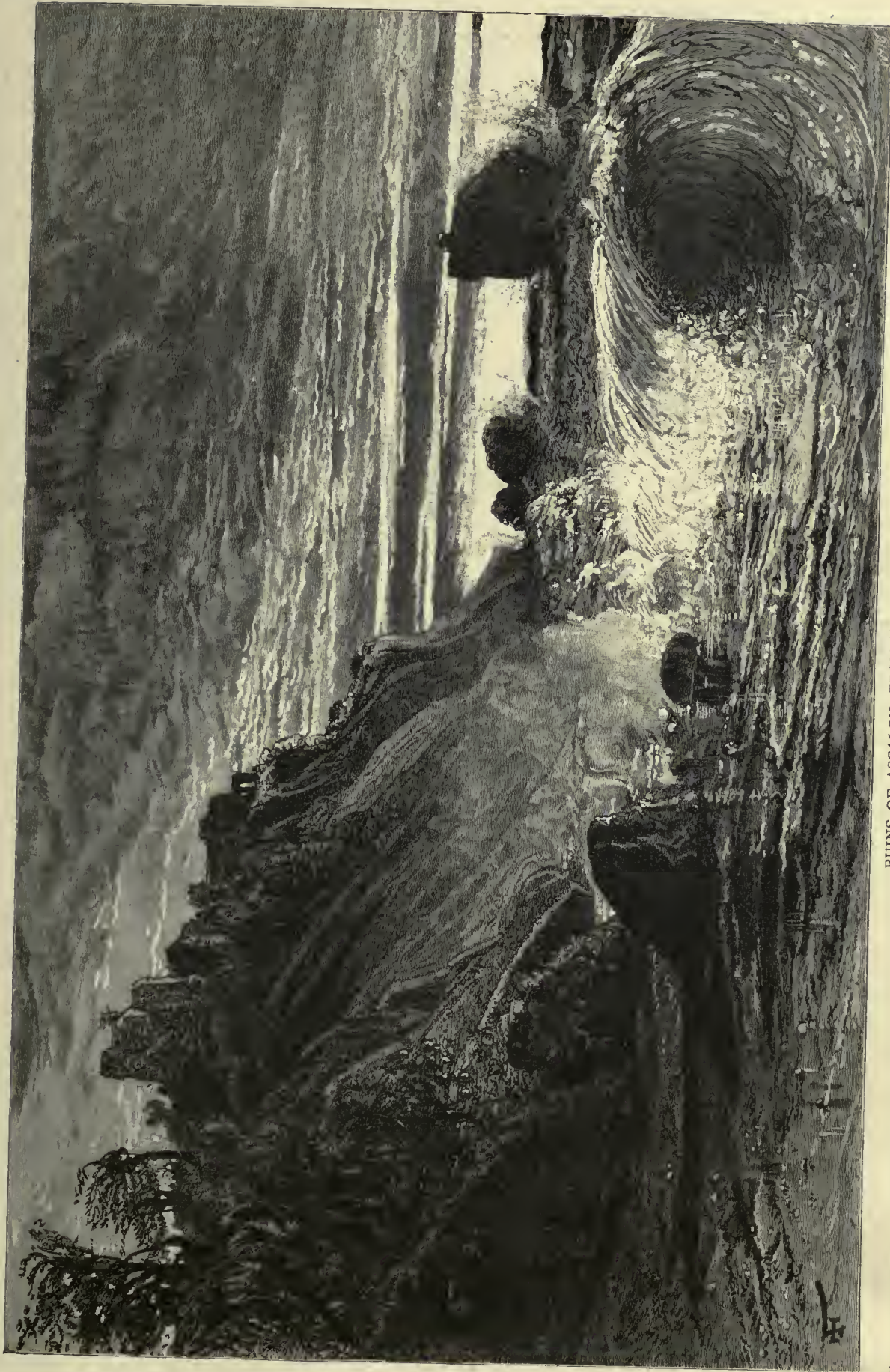
RUINS OF ASCALON, FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

Here there is a shallow bay, with a landing-place for small boats. The beach is strewn with masses of ancient masonry. On the cliff above there is a Muhammedan shrine, called El Khudrah, with a few palm-trees near it.

the principal streams of the Philistian plain. On every side are the traces of old towns or villages crowning each knoll as

we rise, but none of historic interest till we reach Khûrbet Merash, the ancient Mareshah, standing on a low hill in very undulating ground—one of the fortresses of Judah. Here Asa won the greatest victory in the records of the southern kingdom, when, with a levy of the whole adult nation, he defeated the countless hosts of Zerah, king of Ethiopia or Upper Egypt, and pursued the fugitives right across Philistia, beyond Gaza (see page 175), as far as Gerar. Though several thousand troops could deploy in the open ground, the position is such that Zerah could not bring his superiority of force to bear, and the front ranks being

broken only spread panic among the crowded masses at the opening of the plain. The whole is now covered with low brushwood, and swarming with partridges, but not a tree exists in the whole country till we arrive at the outskirts of Beit Jibrin (see page 180). We may make a



RUINS OF ASCALON, FROM THE NORTH.
Showing the fortifications at the north-west corner of the city. The western wall was about twelve hundred feet in length, and followed the line of the edge of the cliffs, which are from thirty to seventy feet in height. The conquest of Ascalon by Rameses II. is recorded on the walls of the Temple of Karnac.

détour hence to the north, so as to enter the town by that side, and in so doing visit a site which may aid in identifying the place—Khūrbet Gat. The name is well known and recognised by the fellahin, who point out the hill to the north-west of Beit Jibrin, full of old foundations, and well adapted for a fortress, as *Gat*. Of this more anon. No place in South Judæa contains so many and such varied remains as Beit Jibrin. The modern town is of some extent, though shrunken indeed within its ancient limits. There are, perhaps, one thousand inhabitants, of a different type from the fellahin, large-made, muscular, bold and insolent, but industrious and enterprising, and comparatively rich. The father of the present sheikh, Azazeh, was a noted tyrant, defiant of Turkish authority, the terror alike of his own people and of the country around. The stories that are told of him surpass in bloody crime even the hideous tales of Jezzar Pasha (refer to page 87). If he heard of a man having married a handsome wife he would send for the couple, and, if the hapless girl pleased him, would cut down the husband without a word, and tell her that as she was now a widow he should take her. It is only since his death that traders from Hebron (see page 196) or travellers have ventured here. The sheikh's castle is near the ancient fortress, and built of its materials (see page 177). The old citadel, round which the modern town clusters, has been enclosed by a wall of massive masonry, and is probably Crusading, as polished shafts and marble capitals of the Græco-Roman period are often built into the walls, and many broken columns are still standing *in situ* in the courtyards of the modern hovels. The citadel has been about six hundred feet square, and round the walls on the inside were rows of arched vaults, many of which are still perfect and some inhabited. In the centre of the area is the Crusading keep of similar masonry, but which has been partially ruined, restored by the Saracens, and now again a ruin, with massive arched chambers, and a splendid crypt chapel, the groined roof of which still remains. Not the least interesting and useful relic of the past is a noble well, probably Roman, of unusual diameter, faced with most beautiful masonry, and apparently about one hundred feet deep, still affording an abundant supply of water. These are the remains of Beto-Gabra, the "house of Gabriel," its Syro-Greek name, changed by the Romans to Eleutheropolis, which, though now completely lost, was retained as late as the beginning of the ninth century, when the Saracens destroyed it. Though Tell es Sâfy, a short day's journey to the north (see page 161), is a more favourite claimant for the honour, I have always inclined to the belief, when I look at the massive and certainly Crusading masonry, that this is not only Beto-Gabra and Eleutheropolis, but also the Blanchegarde of the Crusaders, the celebrated outpost, which is surrounded by a halo of romance from the heroic and almost miraculous adventures and single-handed feats of our own lion-hearted king. Round it circle the most romantic of the tales of the Crusaders. At Tell es Sâfy there is scarcely a vestige of a ruin, however strong the natural position, and if these walls be not Blanchegarde, what are they? We observed one very interesting relic which may give a hint as to the antiquity of the place. Lying near a well, a little outside the village, was a white marble Corinthian capital in the style of the best period, but in the centre of the cornice, instead of the acanthus leaf, was sculptured the seven golden candlesticks, exactly of

the same pattern as represented on the Arch of Titus. This must be præ-Christian. Is it



GHÜZZEH, THE ANCIENT GAZA.

The modern village, which is of semi-Egyptian character, has neither walls nor gates. The serai dates from the thirteenth century, and the great mosque, Jami'a el Kebir, which towers above the palm-trees, was originally a Byzantine cathedral.

Maccabæan or Herodian? The industry of Beit Jibrin is carpet-weaving, and all around the

Crusaders' castle we saw the tops of the houses covered with women at work, turning out, with the most primitive of looms, and using their fingers as a shuttle, strips of solid and substantial carpet. Outside, all along the pathways, on either side was a sort of public rope-walk, where both weavers and dyers were at work, carefully dyeing and stretching the threads before they were woven. Flocks and herds are abundant, and the shepherds are armed, not only with guns, but with battleaxes, for defence against the wolves, who are the depredators of the hills, as the Bedawin are of the plain. We met a weeping shepherd boy, who told us a wolf from a cave hard by had just carried off a kid before he could save it.

But I am inclined to give Beit Jibrin (see page 180) a yet older history than Blanchegarde, and to identify it with Gath, of which Khûrbet Gat may have been the citadel. It is not its castle nor the remains on the surface which make the plain so remarkable, as the great

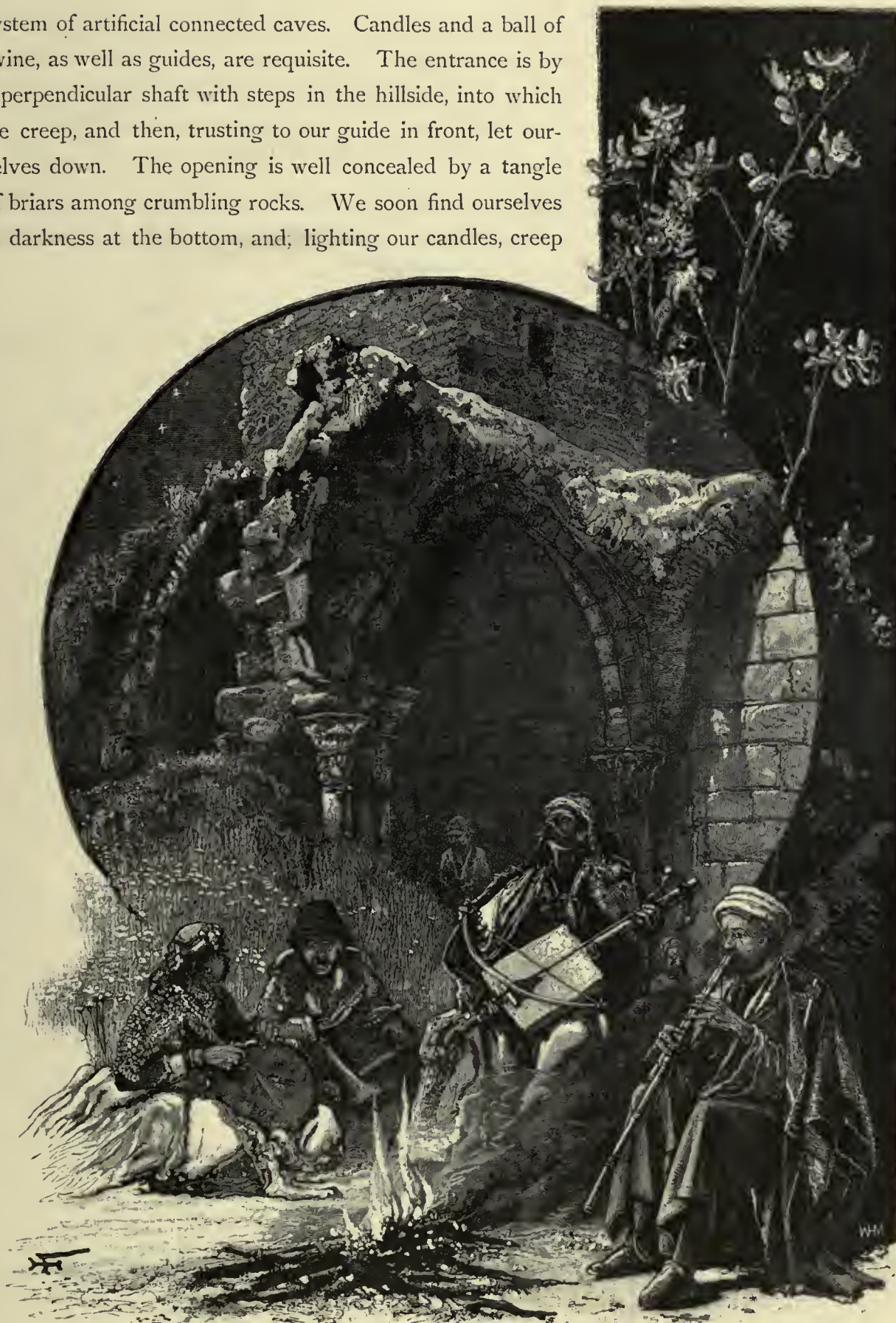


A WELL IN THE PLAIN OF PHILISTIA.

Around it there are a few rudely formed cup-shaped stone water-troughs for the use of flocks and herds.

artificial caves, unrivalled in extent and size in any other part of Palestine, chiefly artificial and far older than mediæval times. Nowhere are Jewish tombs, and kokim, or niches for the dead, so abundant as in the valleys of Beit Jibrin. They are absolutely countless, and point to a vast and concentrated population. Then there are vast *columbaria* (artificial vaults), containing hundreds, nay thousands, of niches for urns. But besides these are the most remarkable subterranean works of Palestine—the labyrinth of artificial caverns, of which the origin and use is utterly lost, and which occupy the whole interior of a hill. The access to them is most intricate and difficult. Robinson was, I believe, the first to explore them. Though from its situation there is much in Tell es Sâfy to support Captain Conder's identification of it with Gath, I have great difficulty in passing over the claims of such important remains as those of Beit Jibrin. But whatever they be, these subterranean halls deserve a visit and description. About one mile south of the town, Tell Sandannah is completely hollowed out by a vast

system of artificial connected caves. Candles and a ball of twine, as well as guides, are requisite. The entrance is by a perpendicular shaft with steps in the hillside, into which we creep, and then, trusting to our guide in front, let ourselves down. The opening is well concealed by a tangle of briars among crumbling rocks. We soon find ourselves in darkness at the bottom, and, lighting our candles, creep



THE CASTLE OF BEIT JIBRÎN, BY STARLIGHT.

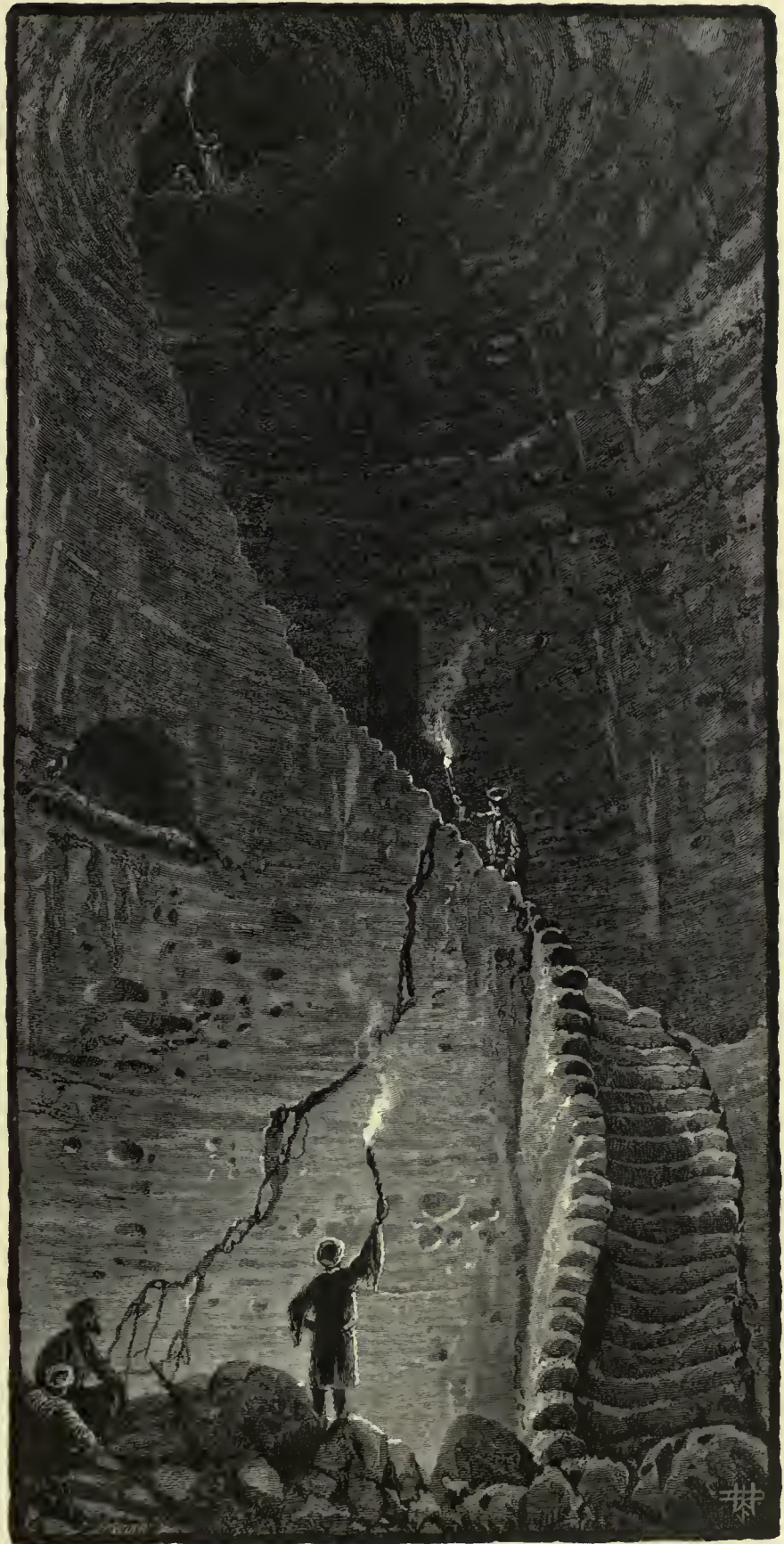
Arab musicians in the foreground. The one-stringed instrument is the "*rabâb esh shâ'ir*," or poet's viol; it is used as an accompaniment to chanted poetry. The double-reed pipe is the "*arghûl*;" its longer reed serves as a drone or continuous bass.

for some way on all fours along a winding passage. This brings us to a circular dome-shaped cavern, apparently about sixty feet high, and without any aperture at the top. We have entered near the bottom, and creep up a flight of steps which wind round the side to about half its height (see page 179). From this we creep by a labyrinthine tunnel to another and smaller domed cave; but between them are various irregularly hewn chambers, and passages branch into bewildering confusion in all directions. There appears to be no regular system of arrangement. We visited at least half-a-dozen of the great domed chambers, and there may be many more, for it would require the skill of a mining engineer to plan and exhaustively explore them. In some the staircase admitted us near the top of the dome, and these steps led to the bottom. There was no exit at the bottom, and only dry hard mud, as though water had at some time penetrated and remained. But they cannot have been intended for cisterns, still less for tombs. There is no trace of any system of lighting them from above, nor could we find a trace of sculpture or inscription. The roofs of the smaller chambers are supported by many pillars of rock left standing. Neither chambers nor domes are on the same level; everything is most irregular. How the excavated rock has been removed is another problem. There may possibly have been holes in the centre of the domes, which have been carefully filled in after the stone was removed. Nothing elsewhere in Syria or in Petra, so far as I am aware, in the slightest degree resembles this subterranean labyrinth. Who were its excavators and what was its purpose, can only be answered by the vaguest conjecture. They can scarcely have been the Horites, or cavemen, the prehistoric troglodytes of Canaan, for these domes are far more elaborate and artificial than any known to have been worked out by primæval man. But long subsequent to their epoch the Idumæans continued to be cave-dwellers, as had been the aborigines. It is possible they received the habit from their predecessors, and that at the period just before the Maccabæan times, when this part of the country was held by them, until conquered by John Hyrcanus, they hollowed out this hill for the sake of security, and finding the rock extremely soft, developed a form of subterranean architecture impracticable among the granite cliffs of Petra.

Half-way between these caves and Beit Jibrin is a very interesting ruin, one of the finest Byzantine churches in Palestine; it was dedicated to Santa Hanna or St. Anne (see page 181). The east end, with its massive apses, is still perfect, and the foundations and a few courses above them remain for the whole length, which is over one hundred and twenty feet for the nave. But two walls run out on either side in a line with the arch of the apse, each of them over sixty feet long, and making the width of the building a little over one hundred and fifty feet; and at the west end are chapels seventy-five feet by twenty-five, with apses parallel to that of the nave. The Crusaders, those marvellous builders, have evidently altered the plan of the building in many ways. Probably they found it partially ruined. They have added piers to the walls of the nave, which support pointed arches. The bay next the central apse still has its roof entire, but it is ten feet lower than the splendid domed roof of the Byzantine apse, which is of magnificent masonry, and has not a stone out of its place. The appearance

of the restored church, with the roof of the nave below that of the east end, must have been somewhat peculiar. The difference between the Byzantine and Crusading masonry may here be studied with advantage.

Between the church of St. Anne and the village we visit many other caverns, some of them with domed roofs such as we have described above, and quite as extensive, but all more or less open to the day. Great portions of the roofs have fallen in, and many of the domes have a circular opening at the top about six feet in diameter, as though these had been intended for cisterns. There are many inscriptions, some of them at a great height, but all entire. We could find no Latin or Greek inscriptions, but many Christian symbols, proving that they are at least prior to the Saracenic invasion. The sides of the caverns are dressed with a pick diagonally, and in some places great pillars have been left to support the roof; and there are apses at the east end of two or three, as though they had been at some time used as chapels. On one, and one only, was a broad border of tracery



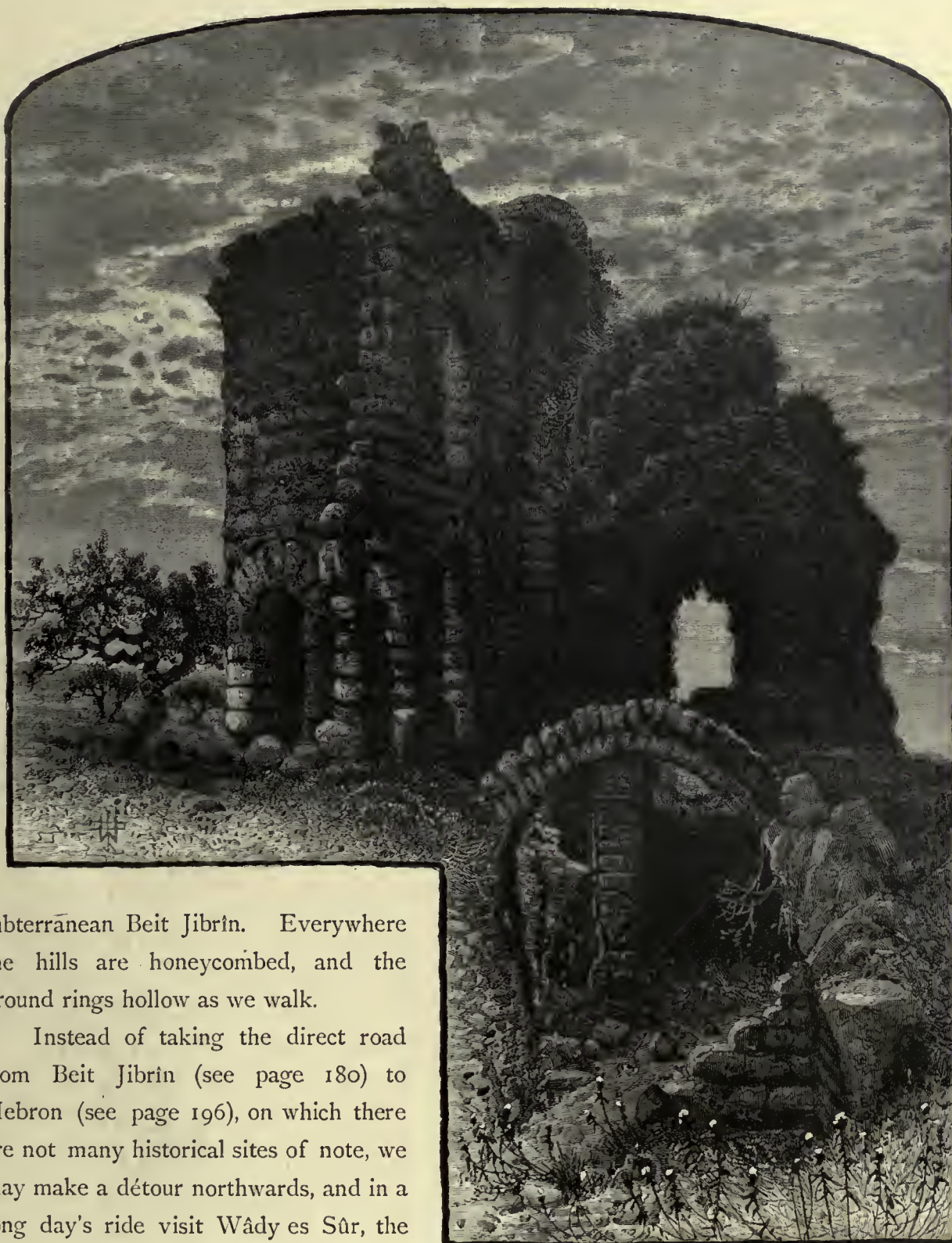
SUBTERRANEAN LABYRINTH OF TELL SANDANNAH (BEIT JIBRÎN).
Showing one of the numerous circular dome-shaped caverns, with its winding rock-cut stairway.



THE VALLEY OF BEIT JIBRÎN.

With a distant view of the sea and the sandy coast-hills. On the hillside on the left the entrance to one of the great caverns with which this district abounds is shown. In the foreground a shepherd is sleeping; near to him are his dog and gun and double-reed pipe.

running on either side just below the roof. Days might be spent in exploring the caverns of



subterranean Beit Jibrin. Everywhere the hills are honeycombed, and the ground rings hollow as we walk.

Instead of taking the direct road from Beit Jibrin (see page 180) to Hebron (see page 196), on which there are not many historical sites of note, we may make a *détour* northwards, and in a long day's ride visit Wādy es Sûr, the upper portion of the Vale of Elah, the recently recovered cave of Adullam (Ed el Miyé), and Keilah. Wherever we wander we shall find ruins in abundance. So frequent are the proofs of a former dense

THE CHURCH OF ST. ANNE, BEIT JIBRÍN.

Called by the Arabs El Kentseh; it stands one thousand and seventy-two feet above the sea, opposite to Tell Sandannah (Santa Hannâ?). It was originally a Byzantine church, but was restored by the Crusaders.

population that Captain Conder estimates the number of ruined sites to average three for every two square miles. We ascend the whole way, for Hebron lies two thousand one hundred feet above Beit Jibrin, and the hills we cross to reach it are three hundred feet higher still. For two miles the path winds among the charming olive-groves by the side of the old Roman road to Jerusalem, still very distinct and even perfect in places. Emerging from the olive-groves we continue up a narrow wâdy, for some way by the side of the Roman road and aqueduct, with the characteristic rounded and rocky hills of Judæa shutting us in on all sides and forbidding any distant view. Then turning eastward we wind up a labyrinth of little wâdys, the lower portion always cultivated with corn, by the edge of which we ride, guiding our course by compass and map alone, for the valleys meet and intersect in bewildering confusion, and we find not a solitary human habitation the whole way, and rarely meet a fellah at work or an Arab wandering on foot. After three hours' ride over rugged hills and through little winding stony valleys, carpeted with green wheat, we find ourselves in front of a dome-shaped hill, round the base of which the valley divides. The sides are perforated with caves. For the first time to-day we see families of women and children sitting in front of the scattered caves. We have in fact come on a troglodyte village. We are told that the next hill is Ed el Miyé, and declining the hospitable proffer of coffee if we will only alight, we ride on to the head of a little glen which opens out on either side. To the right and left the brown stony hills, brilliantly stippled with cyclamen and anemone, are studded with countless caves. In front is an isolated hill, round which these wâdys sweep, clothed with green turf and crowned with low ruins—"Khurbet Ed el Miyé," the old city of Adullam (refer to page 142, vol. i.). To this we climb direct; up the hill, and just below the brow, where it dips on the opposite eastern side, is a small whitened dome—the Mukâm of Neby Mudkhar. The prospect hence surprises us. A fine broad valley (Wâdy es Sûr) is spread before us, the upper part of the Vale of Elah, the land of Samson and of David's wanderings. Here and there a terebinth, one of them an especially noble tree, forms a conspicuous feature in the valley. On the opposite side rise other bare and rounded hills. Close by the wely is the low opening of a well-smoked cave, still inhabited. It is nowhere lofty, but very extensive, and several of its branches have been built up. We afterwards found one of these branches which had been built off, with an opening cut in its roof. There was certainly here abundant room for David's four hundred refugees. The mouth of the cave commands a fine view, and is well situated for security from surprise. It must have been an admirable station from which to make forays and sweep down on any hapless travellers making their way to or from the Philistian plain by the wâdy below.

Descending the hill of Adullam, the route to Hebron lies up the wâdy, now called the Wâdy es Sûr. Below, at the junction of another valley, stands one of the largest trees in Palestine, and which sometimes gives its name to the valleys. It is conspicuous from afar, and reminds us of the ancient name lower down—Emek Elah—the Vale of the Terebinth (Wâdy es Sunt, see page 157). An old road, not Roman, but earlier, may be traced up the valley towards Hebron, passing between Keilah and Hharass, or Hareth. We rapidly ascend,



H

H. FENN PINKET

ALFRED KRAUSSE SCULPT

THE BRON.





the valley narrows to a watercourse a few feet wide, the hills are steeper and steeper, and the path a goat-track occasionally varied by a flight of broken natural stairs. Several ancient wells, shaded by a tree on the wayside, still supply the traveller with water; and just above one of these are the ruins of Keilah, still known by the same name, dreary and unattractive, and with no decipherable remains, yet once the head-quarters of David, and then a fenced city. It is a strong natural situation, and a few men might hold the pass.

There is little to detain us on the rest of the way to Hebron. Hharass is passed on the right. The road still ascends till we reach an irregular mountain plateau, about six miles north-west of Hebron, and after crossing it, descend no longer bare hills, with brushwood and pasturage, but carefully enclosed and cultivated vineyards, with clumps of olive and fig yards. We are now in what is popularly known as the Vale of Eschol (see page 192), though the true Eschol must be placed many days' journey to the south, near Kadesh Barnea.

As we approach the environs of Hebron, on the left of the paved and walled road, a wide gateway leads through some vineyards to a large building, the Russian hospice, erected just behind a very fine old tree, the traditional oak of Mamre (see page 193). For at least three hundred years this tree, which is not a terebinth (*elah*), but an *ilex*, or evergreen holm oak (*Quercus pseudo-coccifera*), has been visited by pilgrims and known as Abraham's oak. That, however, was in another place, Ramet or Mamre, and was a terebinth. It has long since gone, and this noble tree will soon follow, for within the last twenty-five years it has lost more than half its limbs, and is rapidly sinking into decrepitude (see pages 192 and 193). It used to spread its shadow over a circumference of one hundred yards, and its trunk measures thirty-two feet in circumference at a height of six feet from the ground.

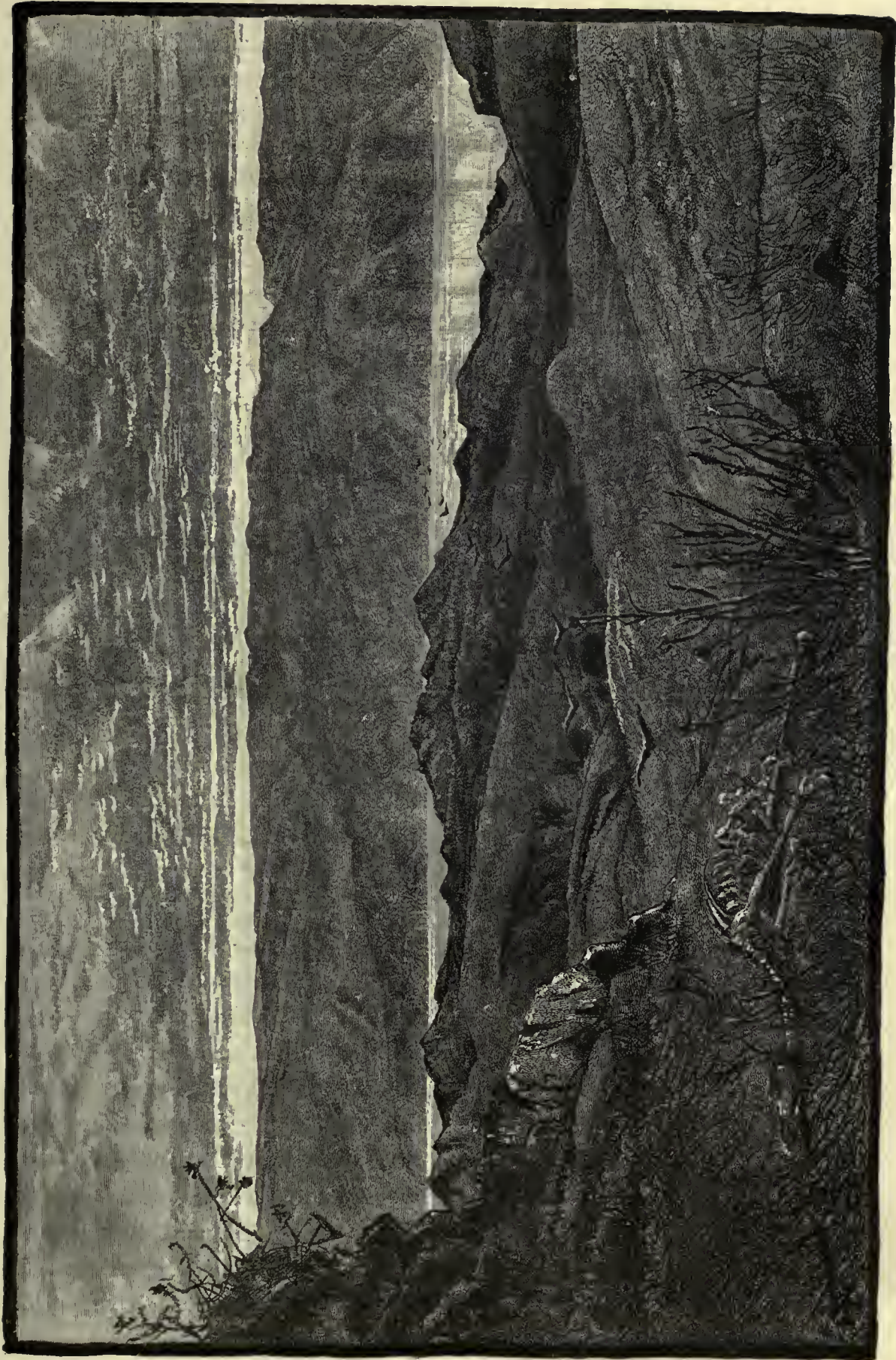
One mile farther and we are at Hebron (see page 197), or rather in front of it, for the road runs alongside the long straggling suburb of Esh Shêkh, and then passing to the south of the central quarter El Haram, we halt on the slope facing the city, by the Muhammedan cemetery, with the pools of Hebron directly below us, and the famous mosque in front, behind the buildings of the city. Hebron, though it stands higher above the sea than any other city of Palestine, is yet one of the very few ancient sites which is not on, but under, a hill. The ancient city may have been a little more to the north-west, but the pools (see page 196) as well as the Haram fix the variations within narrow limits. A wide open grassy space extends south and west, surrounded by olive-clad hills. The central and conspicuous feature of Hebron is the great Haram wall (see steel plate). It is an oblong enclosure about two hundred feet by one hundred and fifteen, and fifty-eight feet high, surrounding the cave of Machpelah, the burial-place of Abraham and his family for three generations. The ground on which it stands is very steep, and was possibly below or "before" the ancient city, which claims to be one of the oldest in the world, built, as we are told, seven years before Zoan, the classical Tanis (a date which has not yet been ascertained), and coeval with Shechem and Damascus. Besides its own antiquity, it embraces here the most ancient and the most authentic of all the holy places of the Holy Land. Much controversy has arisen as to the date of this wall. Beyond



THE VALLEY OF BERACHAH.

Jehoshaphat's "valley of blessing." A wide open vale between Tekoa and the road from Hebron to Bethlehem. In the foreground there is a lime-kiln, and on the distant hill a ruined site, two thousand eight hundred and fifteen feet above the sea, called Khurbet Bereikuh.

its great height and massiveness, it is of marvellously beautiful workmanship—as Josephus describes it, “of beautiful marble and admirably worked.” The stones are many of them of immense size: one is thirty-eight feet long and three and a half feet high, the chiselling is very fine, and all have the true Jewish marginal draft, broad, shallow, and beautifully cut. Sixteen pilasters strengthen each of the longer, and eight each of the shorter sides. In spite of recent theories and criticism, it seems impossible to assign to the building a date later than that of Solomon. It existed in the time of Josephus, who speaks of it with



THE WILDERNESS OF JUDÆA.
With a view of the Dead Sea (Bahr Lût) and mountains of Moab at sunrise.

rapture; and had it been the work of his hero, Herod, it is incredible that he should not have assigned it to him, when he so fully specifies all his other architectural works. And if it were old then, it is impossible to assign a later epoch than the Hebrew monarchy. After the return the nation was too poor and enfeebled to have undertaken such a structure, and the masonry harmonizes with what we know of Solomon's age. There is really no valid ground for rejecting the consentient tradition of Jews and others for two thousand years.

It were strange indeed if any of the Herodian princes should here also have raised, at enormous cost, a building utterly differing from the countless products of their architectural passion and Roman taste, with which the land is strewn. Stranger still had any Byzantine architect here conceived a work of such impressive simplicity, without one single feature—either in design or execution—in common with the elaborate ornamentation in which he everywhere else indulged.

A modern Saracenic wall surmounts the old enclosures, and at the north-east and south-west angles minarets have been added. The entrance is by a staircase, to which access is forbidden to Christians, though we succeeded in running up and peeping in at dawn, without being detected. But this is a rash and rather dangerous experiment. It is only within the last few years that two or three royal and princely parties have been permitted to enter. The first of these was the Prince of Wales in 1862, and to his companion, the late Dean Stanley, we owe the account of the interior. This has been at one time a Byzantine church, the enclosure having, in the Jewish period, been free from buildings. The apse has been cut and the arches pointed when it was transformed into a mosque. It occupies about a third of the interior space, and contains cenotaphs, not tombs, of the various patriarchs whose dust lies in the cave beneath. The shrines of Abraham and Sarah are outside the mosque, and within, in corners, are the chapels of Isaac and Rebekah, and of Jacob and Leah, the two latter in a separate cloister. Outside, but attached to the enclosure, is another cenotaph, which Muhammedans claim as that of Joseph, who, they say, was brought hither from Shechem. There is a mosque on the north side, to the roof of which we obtained access, and whence we could look down upon two other shrines of Jacob and Leah. To the cave itself beneath no one has yet obtained access. There is an opening at the corner of Abraham's shrine, in the living rock, which is evidently an aperture into the cave itself, but this has never been penetrated for centuries. Were it examined we could not expect to find any traces, save dust, of the earlier patriarchs; yet as Jacob was embalmed with all the skill of the Egyptians and dignified with royal honours, it is quite possible that his mummy case still remains, for Machpelah has never passed into any hands but those who loved and revered the patriarchs. Jew, Christian, and Moslem concur in this, and during the period of Roman rule, we know well how careful they were to conciliate the local cults of every conquered nation, to whom they always left the regulation of their own religious matters. We may feel certain that these hallowed sepulchres have remained for four thousand years undesecrated and undisturbed.

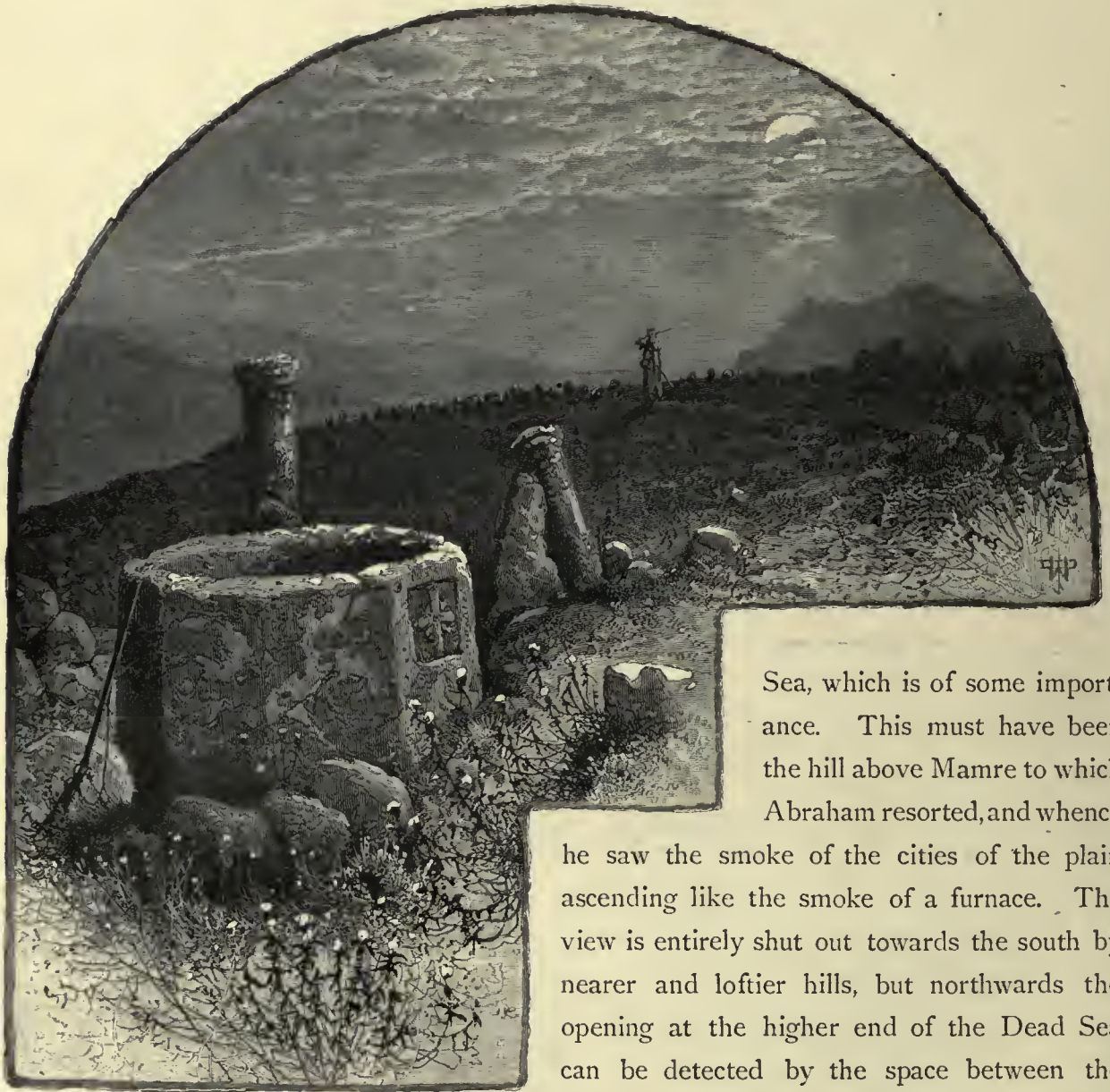
There remains one more relic of the Hebrew times to be noticed in Hebron—the pools

or tanks. The most important of the two is the lower pool, a square tank of very ancient masonry, massive and finely wrought, one hundred and thirty-two feet square, and some fifty feet deep (see page 196). Its supply never fails, being derived from subterranean conduits, which seem also to supply a similar but rather smaller pool of like antiquity, higher up on the north edge of the city. It was over this lower pool, according to consentient tradition, that David hanged the murderers of his rival Ishbosheth, and set an example of magnanimity to foes and of stern justice rarely witnessed in the struggles of Oriental monarchs.

The history of Hebron—with the single exception of the seven and a half years during which it was the capital of David's southern kingdom, before the fall of Ishbosheth enabled him to unite Israel at Jerusalem—presents scarcely an event worthy of note, since the days of Abraham; with memorials of whom the whole neighbourhood abounds. The only two undoubted monuments of the past, the Haram and the Pools, are, we have seen, connected with these epochs respectively. To the Jew, though he clings to it, the memories are bitter as well as hallowed. For it was close to Hebron, at a spot if possible even more hallowed than Machpelah itself—under the oak of Mamre (see page 189), where Abraham had so often pitched his tent, where he conversed with God, and where he received the promises to himself and to his seed—that, after the great revolt of the Jews had been finally suppressed at Bether, the Emperor Hadrian sold tens of thousands of hapless captives to a slavery worse than death itself.

The site of Mamre, now known as Râmet el Khülil (see page 189), is about two miles north of Hebron, a little to the right of the road to Jerusalem. It was once a Roman road, carefully paved, as perhaps it had been in the days of royal Solomon, but certainly it is worse now than it could have been when it was but a mountain path, along which Abraham may have often passed to visit his friends at Hebron. The place is identified on the authority of Jerome, and must have been well known in his days, and the Jews have always looked on it and revered it as the home of Abraham. There is nothing to mark the place till we reach it—a small flat plain extends to the foot of the hills half a mile off, without a tree or a shrub, and only some few dilapidated fences where patches of vegetables have been cultivated. Here we find several deep wells, three of them carefully faced with dressed stone, and evidently very ancient. By the largest of them are two lines of an unfinished enclosure, at right angles, two hundred feet and one hundred and sixty feet respectively in length, and built of very large square stones, but without a marginal draft. There remain only two courses, three and four feet high respectively, and some of the stones fifteen feet in length. It is impossible to discover the object of this building, if indeed it were ever finished, for there are very few traces of débris to be seen around. It cannot have been the basilica which Constantine erected here, for a little farther to the east the foundations of a large Byzantine church can be easily traced. It may have been the enclosure by the great terebinth, which had become before the time of Constantine a place of worship both for Christians and heathens, and under which Hadrian sold the captive Jews. A great terebinth existed here as late as the fourth

century A.D., traditionally that which had shaded Abraham's tent, and very possibly its real successor. It is well worth while to ride up to the top of the hill to the east of the plain. The view is fine and commanding, and there are traces of an old town. But it suggests a corroboration of the true positions of the cities of the plain, at the north end of the Dead



TEKU'A, THE SITE OF TEKOA.

Showing the remains of a Byzantine church, and its massive baptismal font of octagonal form.

Sea, which is of some importance. This must have been the hill above Mamre to which Abraham resorted, and whence

he saw the smoke of the cities of the plain ascending like the smoke of a furnace. The view is entirely shut out towards the south by nearer and loftier hills, but northwards the opening at the higher end of the Dead Sea can be detected by the space between the Judæan range and the dim distant outline of the Moab mountains, so that though the plain of Jordan is itself sunk far out of sight. the

smoke of any great conflagration could be seen, and the spot whence it arose identified.

There is a curious tradition connected with Beni-N'aïm, a lofty height just five miles south-east of Rameh, with a wely, called Nēby Lût, believed by Muhammedans to be the burial-place of Lot. Here, they say, Abraham stood and interceded for Sodom. The place is worth a visit for the sake of the view from the top of the mosque. It is exactly on the watershed between the Jordan and the Mediterranean, and we ascend the whole way from Rameh or

Hebron. It is one of the highest isolated points in this part of the country. The view embraces the country round Hebron, but not the city itself; and though shut in to the north, is unveiled towards the south and south-east. We could see the whole southern wilderness of Judah, rapidly descending from Nabal's Carmel, which is very distinct, with its tower, seven miles south, and seeming to form a gradually sloping plain rather than a series of ravines, which it really is. The mountains east of the Dead Sea (see page 185) can be traced from the neighbourhood of Heshbon southwards, and through two openings glimpses of the sea itself may be caught, one by the pass of Engedi (see page 200), and another showing a portion of the sandy promontory of the Lisan (see page 204). The Muhammedans, in dedicating this as a holy site, appear to have seized on an old Christian tradition, for this height is evidently the Caphar Barucha of Jerome, which was visited by his friend Paula as the place where



RÂMET EL KHÛLÎL, THE SITE OF MAMRE.

The camping-place of Abraham. It is a little way to the right of the old Roman road to Jerusalem, and is also known as Beit Khûlîl, "the house of Abraham."

Abraham met the Lord. The village itself is well built of stone, with some ancient remains, and the surrounding lands are well tilled; but we are here almost on the limits of arable cultivation.

This Barucha must not be confused with the Berachah of 2 Chronicles xx. 26, near Tekoa (see page 188), where Jehoshaphat and his army returned thanks for their miraculous deliverance from the combined forces of Ammon, Moab, and Edom, who had turned their arms against each other in mutual slaughter near Tekoa, before the Jewish king and his troops could meet them. The name they gave to the place was the Valley of Berachah, *i.e.* "blessing." The name has continued to this day in the Wâdy Bereikuh, a wide open valley between Tekoa and the road from Hebron to Bethlehem, and represented on page 184. It does not lie directly in our course, but may conveniently be visited by following the Roman road northward till within three miles of the Pools of Solomon (see page 145, vol. i.); or, more conveniently still,

by pursuing the mountain track parallel to this along the crest of the ridge towards Tekoa, and then descending at once on Berachah. West of this ridge there is general cultivation; the eastern slopes are for the most part bare downs, with sparse stunted shrubs, pastured over by the Ta'amireh Arabs, abounding in partridge, and the favourite haunt of the gazelle and a few ibexes or wild goats.

From the Wâdy Bereikuh a ride of five miles brings us to Tekoa (see page 188), crossing the little upland plain, ensconced in a circle of hills, called Bukat et Teku'a. In front of us is a long hill, with a copious spring at its foot and ruins on its top. The name is scarcely changed, Teku'a for Tekoa, and the district in its natural features seems to have been always what it is now—bare, treeless, open pasturage. We here lose all traces of the ancient terraces which gird the undulations of every hill farther west with their swathing bands. Here and there are still patches of cultivation in the hollows of the valleys, but the soil is dry and stony, and we begin here to lose the rich vegetable mould which, however scanty, still covers more or less the whole of the central hills, and have, in its stead, only a thirsty chalky marl. That vegetable soil is doubtless due, in the first instance, to the primæval forest, which certainly once covered the whole of the Judæan as of the Gilead range, but which has left no traces of its existence on the western slopes towards the Dead Sea (see page 185). Tekoa thus stood on the outskirts of civilisation. Though a city, and a fortified one, for its strategic importance is evident, and it was the permanent advanced post towards the pass of Engedi (see page 200), yet it is not girt with a number of low ruin-topped knolls, like the strongholds of the country we have been traversing. As a town it stood in the centre of a nomad district, and the inhabitants of the region eastward dwelt in tents like their modern successors, the Ta'amireh Arabs. But that it was always a garrison post is indicated by the words, "Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-Haccerim" (*i.e.* Frank Mountain, or Jebel Fureidis, the peak facing us on the north), (see page 137, vol. i.). Tekoa was fortified by Rehoboam as one of his frontier posts. Of its large buildings little remains that can be identified; but it was occupied during the Christian era, and the most conspicuous ruin is that of the Byzantine church, with the broken columns of its aisles, and a large baptismal font well wrought in hard limestone (see page 188). St. Saba established a convent here; and the Crusaders resettled the place, only to be again, after their expulsion from the country, devastated by the Bedawin.

But the chief interest of Tekoa is not its history, but the fact of its being the birthplace and home of the prophet Amos, a "herdsman of Tekoa" and a "gatherer of wild figs." His early life here, the character of the country, and the nature of his calling, have stamped his writings with an individuality which has attracted the notice of every student and critic, from St. Jerome, the father of commentators, downwards.

From Tekoa to Engedi (see page 203) there is no track, but we may follow the course of the wâdys which converge towards the pass, the Wâdy Husasah, Wâdy el Jihar, or Wâdy el Areijeh. All are equally featureless, all alike without relics of the past, or dwellings of the present. But any of them afford an admirable opportunity for studying the natural products,

especially the flora of the wilderness or midbar, "the highland downs," as contrasted with the lowland plains. During the ride we descend from Tekoa—which is two thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight feet above the sea—two thousand one hundred and twenty-eight feet to the cliff over Engedi (see page 205), which, though only six hundred and sixty feet higher than the Mediterranean, yet overlooks the Dead Sea immediately beneath from a height of all but two thousand feet (see page 204). On the way we see here and there traces of ancient beacon stations. One of these may have been that "watch-tower in the wilderness," the wilderness of Jeruel, mentioned in Jehoshaphat's history (2 Chronicles xx.). But of the name Jeruel we have found no trace in the Arabic nomenclature, though this must be the region, as it lay between Tekoa and Engedi. But of Hazziz, the cliff of Ziz, we have the equivalent in El Hasasah, the tableland just before the pass.

The pass itself is not recognisable till we are close upon it. It is simply a zigzag path, chiefly artificial, but occasionally aided by nature, cut out of the sides of the precipices, at the inner edge of a semicircular wall of cliff, which, spanning a chord of about one and a half miles, embraces a horse-shoe plain, which gently slopes to the shore and forms a sub-tropical oasis. This pass and cliff have been, from the days of Chedorlaomer and Abraham, the one ascent by which invaders from the south and east entered the hill country of Judæa. As far as Engedi they could march by the shore without any obstacle; north of it the shore line is impracticable, even for footmen, and there are no paths by which beasts could be led up. Had they taken any of the openings south of Engedi this must have entailed a long march across a rough and almost waterless wilderness. The trade between Jerusalem and Kerak in Moab is still carried on by this route, by which also the salt is brought from Jebel Usdum.

Few landscapes are more impressive than the sudden unfolding of the Dead Sea basin, and its eastern wall, from the top of the pass of Engedi (see pages 200 and 201). The whole length of the lake may here be taken in one view; the opposite hills are veiled in a delicate haze, the evaporation from the sea clothing the mountain-sides with a gauzy pink, and the tops with as gauzy and light a blue. We wind down the zigzag niche which serves for a path. After descending more than one thousand two hundred feet, there is a break in the cliff. It becomes a rugged slope for the next six hundred feet, and at the base of a rock, the copious warm fresh "Fountain of the Kid" (En-gedi or 'Ain-Jidy)* bursts forth amidst an oasis of tropical vegetation (see page 203), and then, kid-like, skips from rock to rock till it reaches the plain below. From the level at which this spring gushes out of the cliff there are evidences of the most careful system of irrigation, carried round the little amphitheatre at different levels, in the days when the palm, the camphire, and the sugar-cane brought in rich revenues to the possessors of the oasis. It is still the home of many of the choicest and most peculiar plants, birds, and insects of the Dead Sea shore. The camphire still lingers. The fine and striking

* The ancient name of Engedi ('Ain-Jidy) was Hazezon-tamar, "the pruning of the palm" (Genesis xiv. 7). There is no doubt about this identification, for, in 2 Chronicles xx. 2, the place is referred to as "Hazazon-tamar, which is Engedi." The vineyards and camphire of Engedi are mentioned in the Song of Solomon, and Pliny praises its palm-trees, which, according to Josephus, were of "the best kind" (Ant. ix. 1, § 2); he also alludes to its precious balsam, "opobalsamum." In the time of Ensebius "Engaddi" was still a place of importance, and its position, "east of Hebron," is described by the Arab historian, Mejr ed Dîn, who wrote towards the end of the fifteenth century.—M. E. R.

asclepiad, the osier, is abundant, and over its great leaves hover some richly painted Nubian butterflies, while bulbuls and sunbirds suck the bright blossoms of the Indian parasite (*Lonicera indica*). Engedi is the true halting-place for those who purpose to examine the marvellous



WÂDY ET TUFFÂH, COMMONLY CALLED THE VALE OF ESHCOL.

The peasants grouped in the foreground are under the southern branches of Abraham's oak. In the distance the minaret of the great mosque of Sheikh 'Ali Bakka, Hebron, may be distinguished.

remains of Masada, the fortress and the Roman camp around it, which can be visited with only an absence of one night from camp, and which from their position, their workmanship, and their history, are the most remarkable remains on either side of the Dead Sea shore.



ABRAHAM'S OAK, HEBRON.

An ilex or evergreen holm oak (*quercus pseudo-coccifera*). One of the lower branches was broken down by a heavy fall of snow in the winter of 1850. It was cut up into logs and conveyed to Jerusalem; there were seven camel-loads; one log was sent to England.

THE SOUTHERN BORDERLAND AND DEAD SEA.

THERE is no pleasanter place for an encampment in Southern Palestine than in the valley which leads to Hebron, the Wâdy Tüffâh, especially during the vintage season, and in the vicinity of the traditional oak of Abraham (see page 192). This giant tree, which measures thirty-two feet in circumference, and whose leafy crown is supported by four main branches fifty feet in length, is revered as the direct surviving representative of the oaks (erroneously rendered "Plain") of Mamre beneath which the patriarch was encamped when he entertained his angelic visitors and received the news of the future birth of Isaac, the son of promise. The oak rears its head amongst the vineyards north-west of Hebron, and is surrounded by a stone wall, built by the Russians, to whom the field in which it stands belongs. It is known as Ballûtet Sebta, or the "Oak of Rest," and it is supposed to be about two hundred years old. Tradition has at different times shown the world-famed tree at various

sites. Josephus mentions "a very large terebinth-tree, which has continued ever since the creation of the world," as existing about six furlongs from the city of Hebron. St. Jerome places it at what is now known as Râmet el Khülîl, the traditional site of Mamre (see page 189), where a large stone enclosure, a wall and other ruins are to be found; and Sir John Maundeville speaks of Abraham's Oak, which he, however, describes as "the dry tree." "They say," writes the old traveller, "that it has been there since the beginning of the world, that it once was green and bore leaves till the time that our Lord died on the cross, and then it died, and so did all the trees that were then in the world." The present oak, the "Ballûtet Sebta," in the Wâdy Tüffâh, is green and flourishing, and the situation which it occupies accords with the Bible description of Mamre. There is nothing improbable in the supposition that it is the descendant of the ancient grove (see page 193). As a rule, the oaks do not grow to a great size, being cropped while yet young by the goats; but sometimes a tree is preserved for superstitious reasons and attains to an immense age. The worship of trees is an old and widely spread form of primitive religious cult. The Bible constantly couples the mention of groves with "high places" and other sanctuaries of idolatrous worship; the ancient oracle of Zeus Dendrites at Dodona was an oak, and Maximus Tyrius writes of the religion of the Druids, "The image of the Celtic Zeus is a tall oak." So inseparably were groves connected with the worship of false gods that the Israelites were distinctly forbidden "to plant a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord" (see Deut. xvi. 21). In spite of this prohibition we find Hosea (iv. 13) lamenting that the people "sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms." It is not to be wondered at that a grove so intimately connected with the most solemn events in the life of the Father of the Jewish race should be venerated by his descendants, or the memory of the site kept up for ages and a representative tree always cultivated on the spot.

A half-hour's journey farther on takes us to Hebron, now called Medinet el Khülîl, "the City of the Friend," or simply "el Khülîl;" Khülîl Allah, or "the Friend of God," being the name by which the patriarch Abraham is known to the Muhammedans (St. James ii. 23). Few spots in the Holy Land have such deeply interesting associations as this. Here it was that Abraham purchased of Ephron the Hittite the double cave Machpelah to serve as a sepulchre for himself and his house. It was from Hebron that Jacob sent his son Joseph to Sichem, when the Dreamer was cast by his brethren into the well and sold to the Midianites. Hence later on the aged Jacob set out for Egypt by way of Beersheba (see page 209), and here the patriarch's bones were brought to rest beside his kin. Hebron was laid waste by Joshua, and its surrounding territory was given to Caleb, while the city itself was made over as a city of refuge to the house of Aaron. David, after his romantic adventures in the Wilderness of Judæa, reigned in Hebron for seven and a half years, until, becoming sovereign of the whole land of Israel, he removed the seat of his government to Jerusalem. At the gates of Hebron Abner was slain by Joab, and by the pool of Hebron (see page 196) David put to death the murderers of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul. The rebellious Absalom too betook

himself to Hebron, "to fulfil a vow" and offer up sacrifices at the altar of Jehovah for the success of his revolt against his father, for then as now Hebron was next in sanctity only to Jerusalem itself. The ancient name of Hebron was Kirjath-Arba, literally "the city of four," which the rabbinical commentators explain to mean the four patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Adam. The Bible, however, says, "And the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-Arba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims." (Josh. xiv. 15.)

Unlike most towns in Palestine, Hebron does not stand upon a hill, but lies in the narrow part of a valley, called Wâdy Khûlîl, the continuation of Wâdy et Tûffâh. Some have conjectured that the ancient city was situated on the hill north-west of the modern town: this would agree with the Bible narrative, which makes Machpelah to have been "in a field before Mamre—the same is Hebron." It is easy to understand how a new town might grow up round the sacred site, while the original one would disappear. The neighbourhood is exceedingly fertile and the valley has been supposed to be that of Eshcol from the luxuriance with which the vines thrive there. But this site should more probably be looked for in the mountain plateau south of Judæa, which now forms part of the Desert of the Tih, but which must in former times have been as fertile as Palestine itself. Although all is now arid and bare from the failure of the water supply, there are the ruins of immense works for irrigation, and the terraced hillsides are covered with small stone heaps in regular order, which are still called Teleilât el 'Anab, or "grape-mounds." The grapes of Hebron are large, and the clusters grow to an immense size. There is a tradition that it was here that Father Noah planted the vine; his grave is shown at Dura, the ancient Dora, a little to the west.

The town of Hebron contains four quarters: Hâret esh Sheikh, "the sheikh's quarter," so called from the fine mosque of Sheikh 'Ali Bakka on the north-west, which dates from the time of the Mamelukes (see page 197); Hâret Bâb ez Zâwîyeh, "the quarter of the Cloister Gate," on the west; Hâret el Harâm, "the quarter of the Sanctuary," on the south-east; and Hâret el Mushârîkeh, "the common quarter," on the south. The population is from eight thousand to ten thousand, of whom five hundred are Jews. These are the only foreigners permitted in the place; they exercise no trade or industry, but subsist on the charity of their European co-religionists, for whom they offer up prayers in return at this peculiarly holy place.*

On approaching the city, the first object which meets the eye is the square castle-like structure of the Harâm, with its towering walls of ancient and massive masonry (see steel plate). These, as already stated, enclose the mosque which now covers the cave of Machpelah. According to Jewish opinion, it was Solomon who first erected the mausoleum, Esther who restored it, and the Empress Helena who rebuilt it after it had been destroyed or fallen into decay. The walls of the Harâm at Hebron are the most perfect examples of masonry of the kind which exist in Palestine, almost surpassing even the ancient portions of the walls of

* There is an important and anciently founded glass factory on the north side of the Harâm; here lamps and smooth rings of coloured glass, worn as bracelets, are made in great numbers, and distributed all over the country. Hebron supplies the southern districts with waterskins made of goats' hides; and there are a few primitive hand-loom in the town, where strong rough carpets are produced.—M. E. R.

the Temple area at Jerusalem. The stones are still so well fitted together that, notwithstanding

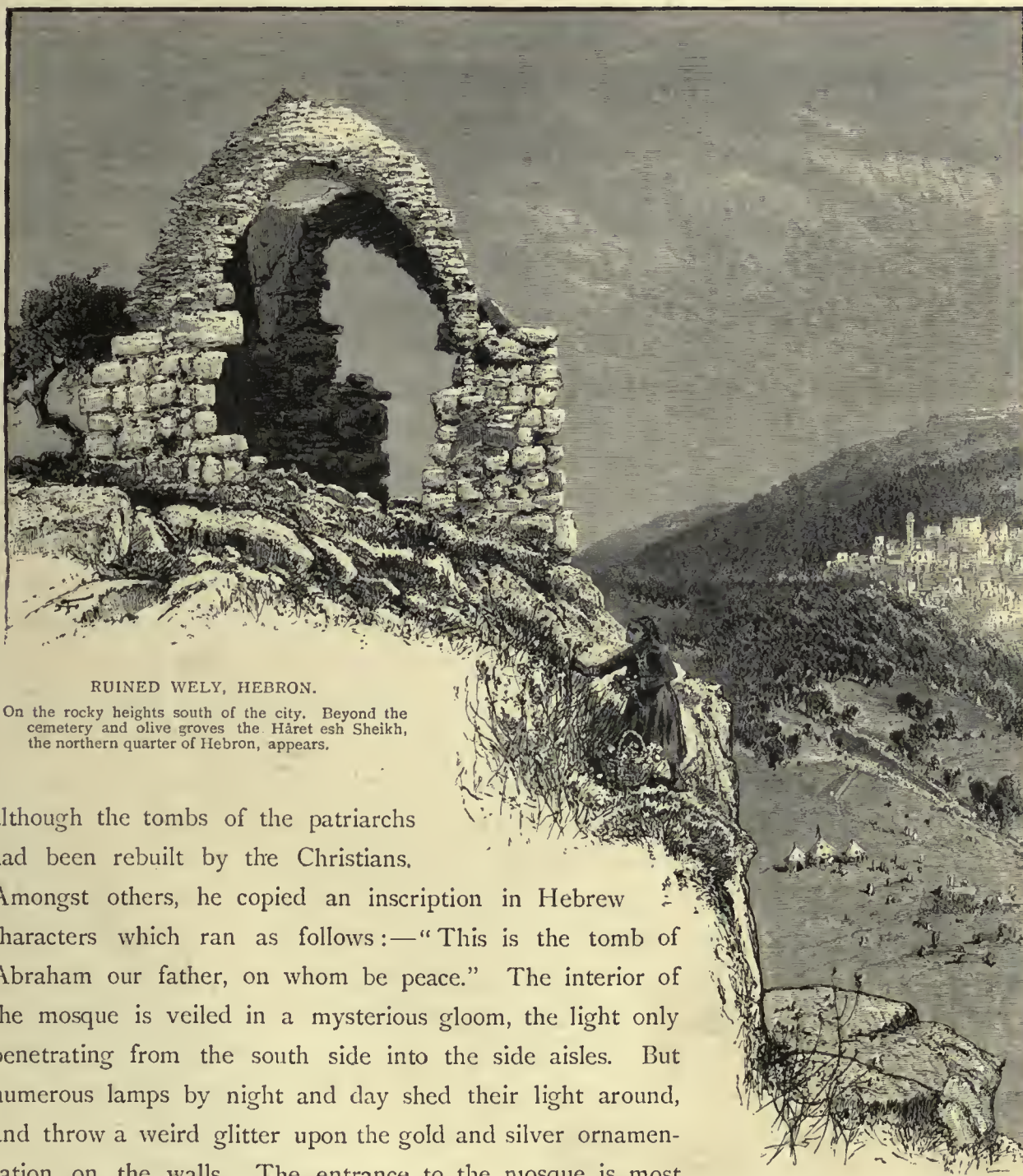


THE POOLS OF HEBRON.

The chief pool is one hundred and thirty-two feet square, and twenty-one feet deep. There are stone steps leading to the bottom at each corner. The other pool is eighty-four feet in length, and fifty-four feet in width. The enclosed building in the distance, on the slope of the hill to the left, is the Quarantine station.

their antiquity, no vegetation has yet found the least place to grow between them. The

building within the sacred enclosure which formerly occupied the place of the present mosque was a well-built square stone erection, like the Kaabeh at Mecca, and is mentioned by the Bordeaux Pilgrim, A.D. 333. Benjamin of Tudela, a learned Jew who visited it in 1160, describes "the great church of St. Abraham" as having been at one time a Jewish synagogue,



RUINED WELY, HEBRON.

On the rocky heights south of the city. Beyond the cemetery and olive groves the Hâret esh Sheikh, the northern quarter of Hebron, appears.

although the tombs of the patriarchs had been rebuilt by the Christians.

Amongst others, he copied an inscription in Hebrew characters which ran as follows:—"This is the tomb of Abraham our father, on whom be peace." The interior of the mosque is veiled in a mysterious gloom, the light only penetrating from the south side into the side aisles. But numerous lamps by night and day shed their light around, and throw a weird glitter upon the gold and silver ornamentation on the walls. The entrance to the mosque is most jealously forbidden by the Muhammedans to any but their fellow-worshippers; by special firman of the Sultan, an exception was made in favour of the Prince of Wales in 1862, the Marquis of Bute in 1866, the Crown Prince of Prussia in 1869, and the sons of the Prince of Wales in the present year, 1882.

Of these occasions the most noteworthy was the visit of the Prince of Wales. His Royal Highness was accompanied by the late Dean Stanley, who thus describes the event:—"Before our arrival at Hebron, the Governor of Jerusalem, Sûraya Pasha, had made every preparation to ensure the safety of the experiment. Accordingly, as the protracted file wound through the narrow valley by which the town of Hebron is approached (see page 192), the whole road on either side, for more than a mile, was lined with soldiers. The native population, which usually on the Prince's approach to a town streamed out to meet him, was invisible, it may be from compulsion, it may be from silent indignation. We at length reached the green sward in front of the town, crowned by the Quarantine (see page 196). There Sûraya Pasha received us. It had been arranged that His Royal Highness should be accompanied by the two members of the party who had given most attention to Biblical pursuits, so as to make it evident that the visit was not one of mere curiosity, but had also a distinct scientific purpose. It was, however, finally conceded by the Governor that the whole of the suite should be included, amounting to seven persons besides the Prince. The servants remained behind. We started on foot, two and two, between two files of soldiers, by the ancient pool of Hebron (see page 196), up the narrow streets of the modern town, still lined with soldiers. Hardly a face was visible as we passed through; only here and there a solitary guard, stationed at a vacant window, or on the flat roof of a projecting house, evidently to guarantee the safety of the party from any chance missile. It was, in fact, a complete military occupation of the town. At length we reached the south-eastern corner of the massive wall of enclosure, the point at which enquiring travellers, from generation to generation, have been checked in their approach to this, the most ancient and the most authentic of all the Holy Places in the Holy Land.

"Up the steep flight of the exterior staircase—gazing close at hand on the polished surface of the wall, amply justifying Josephus's account of the marble-like appearance of the huge stones which compose it—we rapidly mounted. At the head of the staircase, which, by its long ascent, showed that the platform of the Mosque was on the uppermost slope of the hill, and therefore above the level where, if anywhere, the sacred cave would be found, a short turn at once brought us within the precincts, and revealed to us for the first time the wall from the inside. A later wall of Muhammedan times has been built on the top of the Jewish enclosure. The enclosure itself, as seen from the inside, rises but a few feet above the platform.

"Here we were received with much ceremony by five or six persons, corresponding to the dean and canons of a Christian cathedral. They were the representatives of the forty hereditary guardians of the mosque.

"We passed at once through an open court into the mosque.

" The whole building occupies about one-third of the platform.

"I now proceed to describe the Tombs of the Patriarchs, premising always that these tombs, like all those in Muhammedan mosques, and indeed like most tombs in Christian churches, do not profess to be the actual places of sepulture, but are merely monuments or cenotaphs in honour of the dead who lie beneath. Each is enclosed within a separate chapel

or shrine, closed with gates or railings similar to those which surround or enclose the private chapels or royal tombs in Westminster Abbey. The two first of these shrines are contained in the inner portico or narthex, before the entrance into the actual building of the mosque. In the recess on the right is the shrine of Abraham, in the recess on the left that of Sarah, each guarded by silver gates. The shrine of Sarah we were requested not to enter, as being that of a woman. A pall lay over it. The shrine of Abraham, after a momentary hesitation, was thrown open. The guardians groaned aloud. But their chief turned to us with the remark, 'The Princes of any other nation should have passed over my dead body sooner than enter. But to the eldest son of the Queen of England we are willing to accord even this privilege.' He stepped in before us, and offered an ejaculatory prayer to the dead patriarch: 'O Friend of God, forgive this intrusion.' We then entered. The chamber is cased in marble. The so-called tomb consists of a coffin-like structure about six feet high, built up of plastered stone or marble, and hung with three carpets, green embroidered with gold. They are said to have been presented by Muhammed II., the conqueror of Constantinople (A.D. 1453), Selim I., the conqueror of Egypt (A.D. 1518), and the Sultan Abdul Mejid. Fictitious as the actual structure was, it was impossible not to feel a thrill of unusual emotion at standing on such a spot—an emotion enhanced by the rare occasion which had opened the gates of that consecrated place, as the guardian of the mosque kept repeating to us as we stood round the tomb, 'to no one less than the representative of England.'"

The next most interesting objects in Hebron are the two pools (see page 196). The larger of these lies low down in the bed of the valley, which here begins to make a dip, running down with a steady declivity to the ancient border of Beersheba; the other is situated somewhat higher up in the wâdy, and is a little more than half the size. The first-mentioned is traditionally regarded as the scene of the murder of Ishbosheth.

From Hebron the traveller may make a short but deeply interesting journey of some seven or eight hours to the southern end of the Dead Sea. Mounting the slopes of Jebel Jobar to the south-east, we come in about an hour and a half to a small hill on the left, called Tell Zif. This is the Ziph of Holy Writ. The ruins lie on a low hill or ridge between two small wâdys which run from this point down to the Dead Sea. It was in the vicinity of this city that David hid himself (1 Sam. xxiii. 24) and wandered as an outlaw in the wilderness; and "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him," until his band mustered four hundred men. The inhabitants of Ziph twice attempted to betray him into the hands of his persecutor. The town was afterwards fortified by Rehoboam, after which it passes out of history, the last mention of it being made by Jerome in the Onomasticon. Another hour's travelling in an eastward direction brings us to Wâdy Khabra, where for the first time we enter upon the great wilderness of Judæa. Passing thence over a broad plateau, a favourite camping-ground of the Bedawin, we reach at length the top of the Pass of Engedi, where the Dead Sea and the rugged mountains of Moab first burst upon the view (see page 201).

When, as often happens in the rainy season, the sky is overcast with clouds, a dense haze obscuring the mountains, and a fleecy mist hovers over the water, the Dead Sea seems, indeed, worthy of its name : look where one may, no sign of life is visible, and no sound is heard save the dull monotonous surging of the waves. The shore, too, is the very picture of barrenness



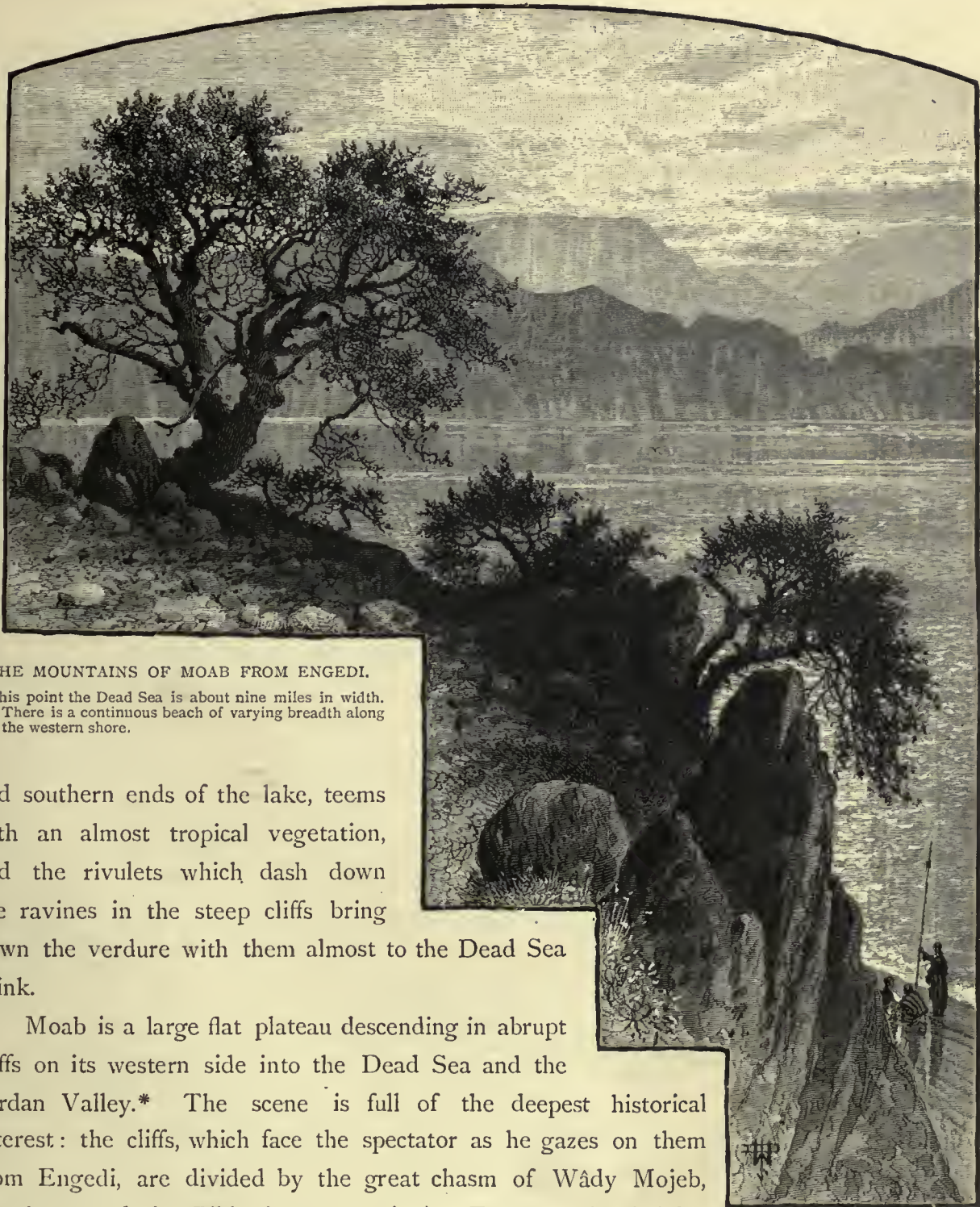
THE DEAD SEA, LOOKING NORTH-EAST FROM ENGEDI.

Anciently called the Salt Sea, and Sea of the Plain. The name Dead Sea, now so familiar, does not occur in the Bible ; it was adopted by Greek and Roman writers in the second century of our era. The Arabs call this sea Bahr Lût (Sea of Lot).

and desolation, the white salt incrustation which covers it being only relieved by the dark patches of black rolling mud or stagnant pools of brine.

But on a bright and sunny day the salt lake wears a far different aspect. The clear

transparent waters then sparkle with a sapphire hue, and the mountains glow with variegated tints. All animated nature also seems to quicken into life, and flocks of storks and cranes may be seen flying overhead (see page 200). The Ghor, or low-lying plain at the northern



THE MOUNTAINS OF MOAB FROM ENGEDI.

At this point the Dead Sea is about nine miles in width. There is a continuous beach of varying breadth along the western shore.

and southern ends of the lake, teems with an almost tropical vegetation, and the rivulets which dash down the ravines in the steep cliffs bring down the verdure with them almost to the Dead Sea brink.

Moab is a large flat plateau descending in abrupt cliffs on its western side into the Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley.* The scene is full of the deepest historical interest: the cliffs, which face the spectator as he gazes on them from Engedi, are divided by the great chasm of Wâdy Mojeb, the Arnon of the Bible (see engraving). From yonder heights Balaam blessed Israel, and Moses looked upon the promised land which he might never enter.

* For Canon Tristram's description of the northern part of the Dead Sea refer to pages 154—161, vol. i., and for further illustrations of the Dead Sea, Moab Mountains, and Jordan Valley, see pages 152, 159, 163, 165, 167, and 168.

Stretching out into the lake on the south-west is the promontory of El Lisân, "the tongue" (see page 204), and far above it, on a high precipitous rock, stands the mediæval bastioned castle of Kerek. Kerek is called in the Bible Kir-Hareseth, Haresh, or Heres, and the latter part of this name has for a long time puzzled commentators and philologists. When at Diban, the ancient Dibon, where the celebrated "Moabite stone" was found, I learned that the term "Harith" in the local *patois* of the district means a hill surmounted by buildings. As "Harith" is the exact Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew "Haresh," Kir-Hareseth would mean "the city on the hill," a description the accuracy of which is patent to the eye, especially when viewed from our present standpoint. This furnishes a curious instance of the survival of an old Moabite word, and of the manner in which the most apparently trifling incidents, customs, and idioms may illustrate the Bible. Kerek was the scene of the last act of the fearful tragedy of the rebellion of Mesha, whose successes at some other time against Israel are so proudly and boastfully recorded on the Moabite stone. Here, after having made one last despairing but futile effort to burst through the beleaguering lines, the Moabite monarch "took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall." In later Crusading times the castle of Kerek was held by the turbulent knight, Raynald of Châtillon, who, by breaking faith with Saladin and attacking the Muhammedan pilgrim caravan in time of peace, brought about the fall of the Christian kingdom in Palestine.

The nearer shore is not visible until we begin to descend the pass by a precipitous and winding path, which in about half an hour brings us to 'Ain Jidy (see page 203). The modern name of this spring, "the fountain of the kid," is absolutely identical in meaning and orthography with the Engedi of Scripture.

The full stream gushes out from beneath a huge boulder upon a narrow terrace of rock four hundred feet above the level of the lake, and, rushing down the steep declivity, its course hidden by rich tropical vegetation, flows out upon a broad patch of alluvial soil (see page 203). Over this it dashes in a sparkling cascade, and again collects itself below in a quiet pool fringed with graceful tamarisks and fragrant oleanders. The roots of the luxuriant growth, however, absorb the water, and the brook never finds its way down to the sea. The water of the spring is warm (83° Fahr.), of a sweetish taste, and impregnated with lime. Around the spring is a cane-brake, with a perfect thicket composed of different kinds of zizyphus, or thorny lote-tree, the *sidr* or *dôm* of the Arabs, who are very fond of its pleasant-tasting fruit. There is also a great profusion of nightshade, or the "egg" or "mad apple," as well as of the *'osher*, a plant seldom found except in tropical regions, and bearing the so-called "apples of Sodom."

The *seyal*, or thorny acacia, the "shittim-tree" of the Bible, also grows here in great abundance. The ancient town probably lay below the spring, and the ruins of several buildings, apparently ancient, are found in the neighbourhood. To reach the level of the lake we descend for about three hundred and thirty feet along the thicket through which the stream

flows and a very steep and rugged path. The sides of the brook are cultivated so far as the water extends by the Rashaidy Arabs. Farther to the north the fountains of 'Ain Terabeh, el Ghuweir ("the little lowland"), and El Fesh-kah, the last a large and copious one, flow into the



ENGEDI, THE FOUNTAIN OF THE KID ('AIN JIDY).

The sparkling limpid water is warm, rather sweet, and impregnated with lime. To the left there is an example of the remarkable *esclepiad* called in Arabic '*osher*'; it bears a bladder-like fruit filled with long silky hairs, used by the Arabs as tinder for their matchlocks.

lake, but their waters are brackish, and the spring of 'Ain Jidy seems to be the main source of sweet water on the western shore. At length we stand upon the shores of the Dead Sea, the frightful desolation of which accords well with the terrible history that attaches to the spot.

We are undoubtedly in the neighbourhood of the "Cities of the Plain," though much difference of opinion exists as to the spot on which they stood. Ancient tradition fixes it at what is now the southern end of the lake, and this accords with the physical geography of the region. We are told (Gen. xiii. 10) that "all the plain of Jordan was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar." And in xiv. 3 we learn that the allied kings "were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea," *i.e.* evidently which had become the "salt sea" at the time of writing. The soundings taken by Lynch prove that



THE SOUTHERN END OF THE DEAD SEA FROM ENGEDI,
Showing the Peninsula called El Lisán (the tongue), which may easily be mistaken for an island.

the southern end of the lake is some one thousand three hundred feet deeper than the northern, and seems to point to some great convulsion of nature on the spot.

Many writers have supposed that the agencies employed in the destruction of Sodom and its sister cities were the natural ones of volcanic eruptions accompanied by earthquake. This hypothesis is quite in accordance with the language of the Bible; the mention in Genesis of the existence of "slime (*i.e.* asphaltic) pits" in the neighbourhood, and of Abraham's seeing that "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace," would certainly seem to indicate some such phenomena. The asphaltic pits are still to be seen, and the frequent and severe earthquakes that have occurred in the vicinity also point to the presence of subterranean volcanic action. The present aspect of the place can only be reconciled with the Scripture



THE CLIFFS OF ENGEDI.

They form a very difficult pass, and the zigzag paths are not kept in repair. The surface of the limestone rock is of marble-like smoothness, and a pale reddish tint is the prevailing colour.

account by supposing the vale of Siddim to have sunk down and been overwhelmed by the waters of the lake.

The Dead Sea, which is about forty-six miles long and nearly one thousand three hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, is shut in on both sides by precipitous cliffs, the bases of which at one time project into the waters of the lake, at others recede and leave a narrow strip of beach. At the southern end a number of low, sandy promontories jut out into the sea, amongst which the largest and most conspicuous is the Lisân already referred to (see page 204). Seen from 'Ain Jidy, the view is magnificent for its rugged and desolate grandeur: opposite are the hills of Moab, and far away to the south stretches the western coast, with its numberless white promontories jutting out into the lake, and towering high over these the rocky precipices rise one above the other like the bastions of some mighty castle. Towards the south-western end of the lake, and washed at the base by its waves, is Jebel Usdum, or the Mount of Sodom, an isolated hill composed almost entirely of crystalline rock-salt. It is about seven miles in length and three hundred and fifty feet in height, and where the water has washed it away in places it assumes quaint forms resembling pillars and minarets, naturally suggesting the pillar of salt into which Lot's too-curious wife was turned. One, the most conspicuous of these pillars, is indeed pointed out as such, and called by the Arabs "Bint Sheikh Lût," or Lot's wife. Just before Jebel Usdum the outline of the once-powerful fortress of Masada may be discerned against the sky. This famous stronghold was originally built by Jonathan Maccabæus, and was enlarged and strengthened by Herod the Great; it was the last refuge of Jewish independence after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

The leafy thicket of 'Ain Jidy, at the foot of the sheer and towering cliffs of the barren mountain, presents a strange contrast to the desolation which surrounds it. The mighty cliffs that overhang it, with the awful chasms and sombre gorges which divide them, also lend an indescribable grandeur to the scene (see page 205). The inhospitable shores of the lake were at one time inhabited, first, perhaps, by the indigenous inhabitants, later on by the Israelites, and after them came a succession of hermits—the mystical Jewish sect of the Essenes and the anchorites of the first few centuries of the Christian era. The mountain-sides are everywhere honey-combed with the caves in which these recluses dwelt; many of them are now quite inaccessible, the paths and terraces in the cliffs by which they were once approached having long since been washed or worn away.

The water of the Dead Sea contains about 25 per cent. of solid matter. Its pungency and saltiness cause intense pain to the eyes if it is allowed to enter them, and it is abominably nauseous to the taste; but it is so buoyant that to sink in it is out of the question. One may float on back or breast, sit on the surface as on a feather bed, and—provided one does not fall over head downwards—perform almost any antics without fear of submersion. Swimming, however, is very trying to the small of the back, from the jerk with which the legs fly out on the least attempt to strike out in the ordinary way. The Dead Sea receives the whole torrent of the Jordan, as well as the rivulets and streams from the ravines in the cliffs of Palestine and

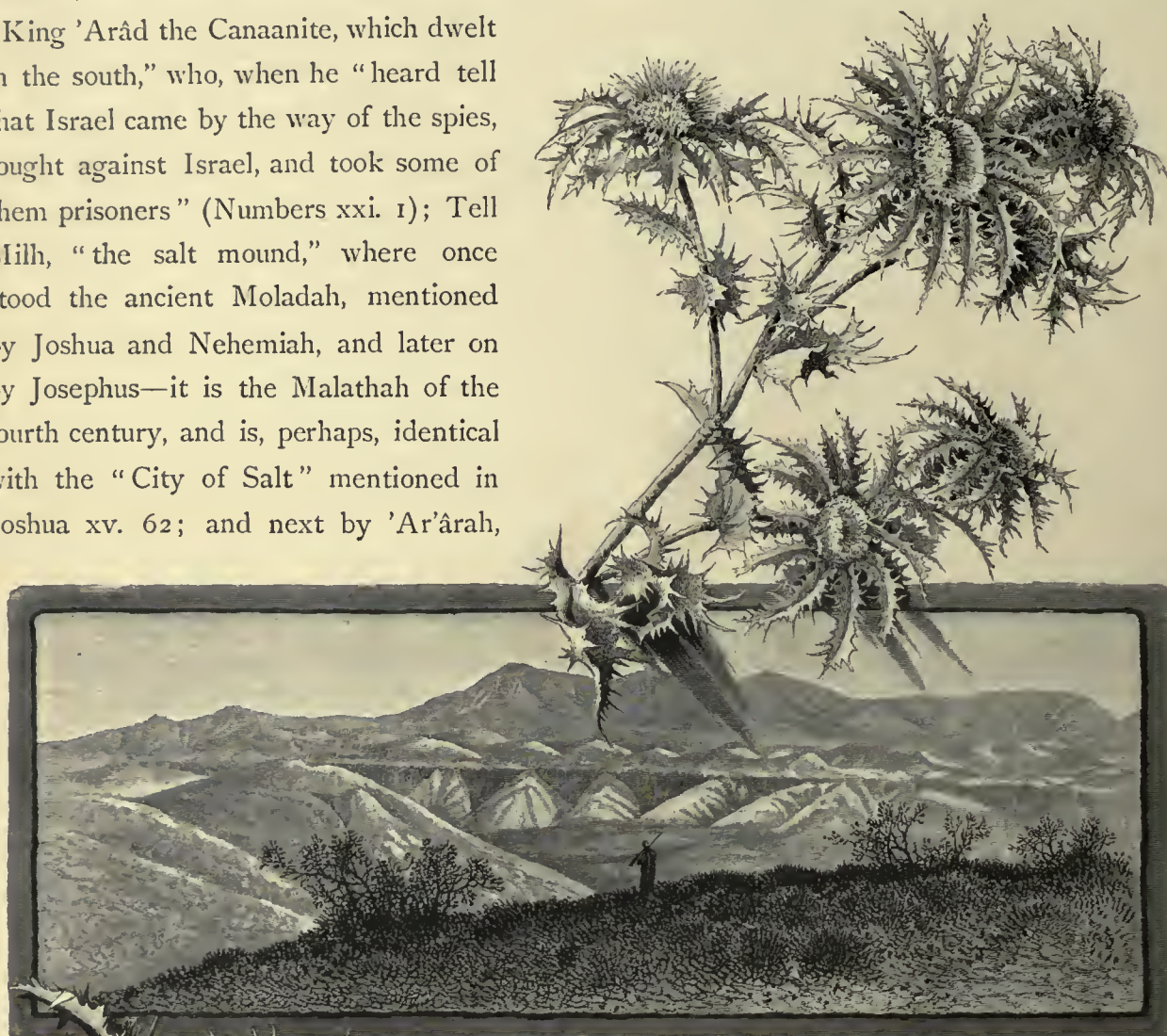
Moab, on its western and eastern shores. The volume of water thus discharged into it has been calculated at six million tons daily, for which there is no apparent, or, indeed, conceivable outlet, the immense evaporation which takes place being sufficient to maintain the level of the lake.

The wilderness of Engedi is as grand but dreary a sight as can well be imagined: a broad rolling expanse, shut in on every hand by high ridges with jagged summits, their sides deeply scored by torrent beds, and intersected here and there by broad valleys of white marl, with not a tree, and scarcely a shrub, to be seen for miles around (see page 208). From time to time a small Arab encampment or a few isolated figures come in sight, and with their primæval costume, and their wild and savage air, seem like some weird vision of David and his outlaw band conjured up by a highly wrought fancy, rather than the ordinary inhabitants of the place.

From the city of Abraham we proceed to another spot connected with the history of the patriarch, Beersheba—variously interpreted, “the Well of the Seven” or “the Well of the Oath”—where he dug the well, and gave seven ewe lambs to Abimelech in token of an oath of covenant with him (see page 209). There were once seven wells here, two of which are still filled with water, and another, in a fairly perfect condition, is dry; they are all built of solid masonry. In the immediate vicinity may be seen traces of the other four wells. An Arab tradition says that, “The Beni Murr dwelt by seven wells (*seba’ biyûr*); each well had seven tanks, each tank had seven troughs, and each trough had seven horses drinking thereat.” Round the two wells which contain water are rude stone troughs, which appear to be very ancient. The southern bank of the valley is banked up with a strong wall of solid masonry, extending for a few hundred yards along the part opposite the wells, which are thus protected from the earth falling in and filling them up. The hillside behind them is covered with ruins, though, from the confused state into which they have fallen, it is impossible now to make out with any certainty the original ground-plan of the town. Higher up in the valley are the foundations of a Greek church. The country around Beersheba consists of a rolling plain, intersected by the wâdy beds of Seba’ and Khûlîl. In spring, when the rains have fallen, it is often covered for miles around with grass, flowers, and herbage; at other times it is nothing but a dry parched land, bare and desolate as the desert itself. Strange and solemn are the thoughts which such a place inspires. Here were the very wells, in all human probability, which the Father of the Faithful dug. The name he gave it still clings to the spot; the Bedawîn, to whom the Scriptures are unknown, still point with pride to the great work which their father Ibrahîm achieved, and as they draw water from it for their flocks and herds, the ropes that let the buckets down still glide along the same deep furrows in the masonry which, mayhap, the ropes of the patriarch’s servants first began. It was to the wilderness of Beersheba, too, that Elijah fled for his life from Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings xix. 3).

We now take a final farewell of Hebron and its sacred memories, and, providing ourselves with an escort of the Jehalin or the Hawetât Arabs, set out upon a journey through the wilder-

ness towards the rock-cut city of Petra, in the land of Edom. Our road leads us past Semû'a, the ancient Eshtemoh, mentioned in Joshua xv. 50; Tell 'Arâd, the site of the city of "King 'Arâd the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south," who, when he "heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies, fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners" (Numbers xxi. 1); Tell Milh, "the salt mound," where once stood the ancient Moladah, mentioned by Joshua and Nehemiah, and later on by Josephus—it is the Malathah of the fourth century, and is, perhaps, identical with the "City of Salt" mentioned in Joshua xv. 62; and next by 'Ar'ârah,



THE WILDERNESS OF ENGEDI,

Where David and his followers lived among "the rocks of the wild goats." There are many caves in the hillsides which might well serve as places of refuge for fugitives and outlaws.

the Aroer of Judah (1 Sam. xxx. 28), one of the cities to which David after his victories over the Amalekites sent a share of the spoil—the only traces of the ancient town which now remain are a few wells built up with rude masonry, some of them containing water.

The character of the scenery now begins to change, rolling hills and rough stony valleys succeeding the open plains through which we have hitherto been passing, and it becomes every moment more evident that we are entering upon the confines of the "great and terrible wilderness." Passing through this wild region, we at length reach Jebel Madherah, a hill of which the Arabs tell the following legend:—"A people once dwelt here, to

whom there came one day some travellers seeking hospitality; but the people of the place did unto them a vile and horrible deed, wherefore the Almighty in his anger rained down stones upon them and destroyed them from off the face of the earth." The base and summit of the mountain are covered with large blocks of stone, to which the Bedawin point in confirmation of their tale. From this point a few hours' journey takes us to 'Ain el Weibeh, with its



BİR ES SEBA', THE SITE OF BEERSHEBA.

The ancient wells can still be traced, and two of them are serviceable; but the city has ceased to exist. In the distance may be seen an encampment of the Tiyáheh Arabs. In the foreground a woman is asking alms of the artist's travelling attendants.

three springs, which Robinson and others have identified with Kadesh Barnea (see page 210). With this I am unable to agree, and prefer placing Kadesh at 'Ain Kadis, about forty miles farther to the west. The name Kadis is in meaning and etymology exactly equivalent to the Kadesh of the Bible, and the identification of this site is perhaps more important than any other in the region, as it forms the key to the movements of the Children of Israel after leaving

Hazeroth for the scene of their forty years' wanderings. The spring which bears this suggestive name is situated at a part of the mountain plateau where this falls to a lower level, and, being more open and less hilly, is easily approached from the direction of Akabah. It is thus situated at one of the natural boundary lines of Palestine. From northern Syria to Sinai southwards the



'AIN EL WEIBEH, ON THE BORDER OF EDM,

In the valley of El Jeib. The name signifies "hole with water." Many authorities regard this now deserted place as the site of Kadesh Barnea.

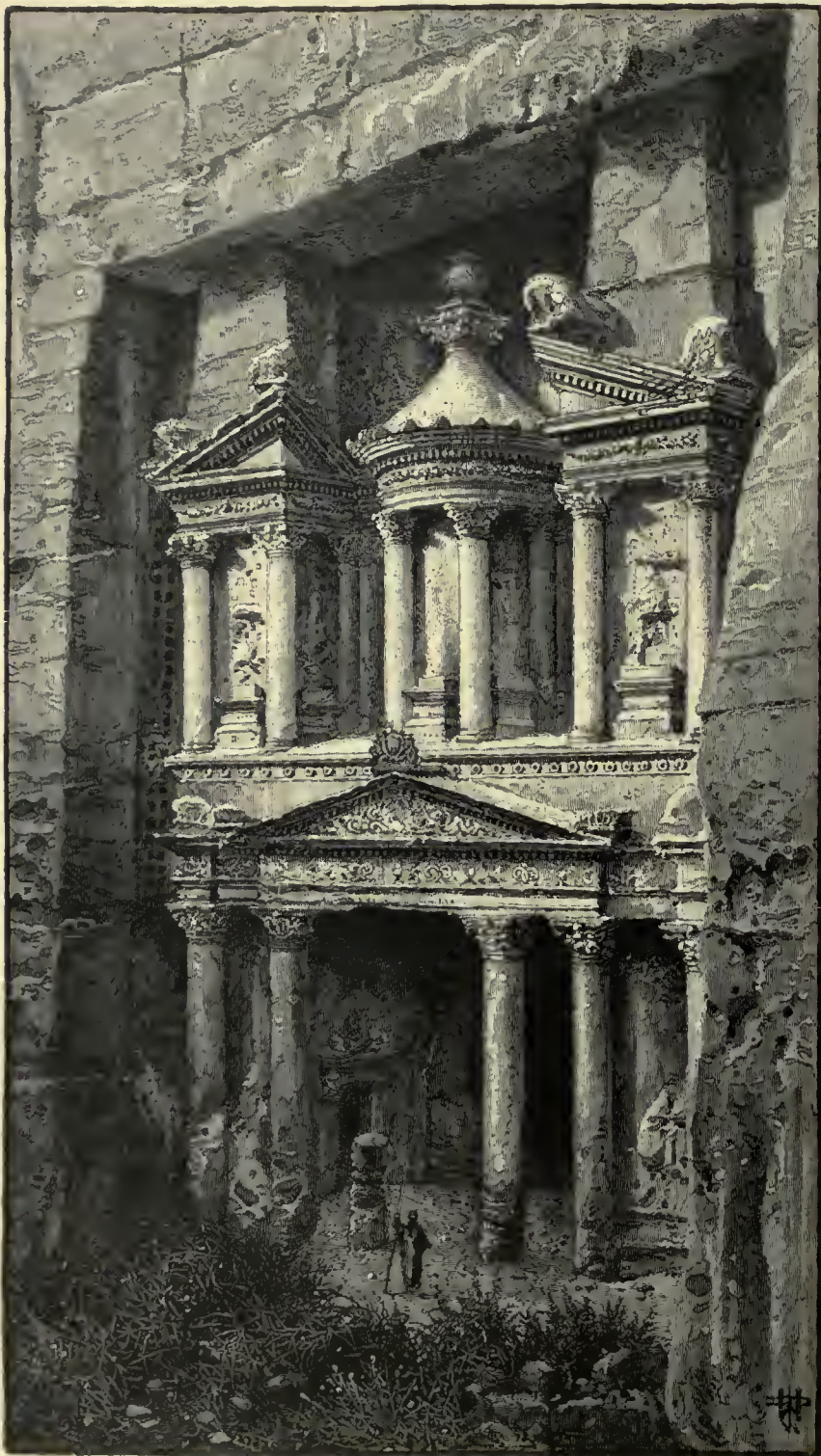
country seems to have certain natural divisions marked by the comparative fertility of the soil of each. In Syria at the present day we have a well-watered and productive soil; in Palestine, south of the Hermon district the soil is much more barren, but shows traces of greater fertility in former times; south of the mountains of Judah, to the point immediately below 'Ain Gadis,

the country, though now little more than a barren waste, shows signs of extensive former cultivation, reaching down even to a comparatively recent period. This tract of land is the Negeb, or south country of Scripture; and 'Ain Kadis is situated on the frontier of the district. Between this and the edge of the plateau of the Tih the country is even more barren, but there are still traces of a primæval race of inhabitants who found a living on its soil. At the time of the Exodus it must have borne the same relation to the then fertile district of the Negeb which that now barren land bears to Palestine at the present day. Now the spies went up from Kadesh, and returned bringing with them grapes from Eshcol, which, as has been stated above, many geographers identify with Wâdy el Khûlîl, or the Wâdy of Hebron. But the city of Hebron is at least four days' journey from 'Ain Gadis, and grapes and figs could not have been brought so far without spoiling—to say nothing of the cautious manner in which Caleb and his companions must have passed through the country. If, then, Kadesh Barnea is at 'Ain Kadis, the grape-bearing Eshcol must be near the same place; and it is a curious fact that among the most striking characteristics of the Negeb are miles of country—hillsides and valleys—covered with small stone heaps, swept in regular swathes, and called by the Arabs to this day *teleilat el 'anab*, or “grape mounds.” From a strategical point of view also, 'Ain el Weibeh is ill adapted for the site of Kadesh Barnea, as the Israelites would there have been confined in a *cul de sac*, with the Canaanites, Amorites, Edomites, and Moabites completely hemming them in; whereas in the neighbourhood of 'Ain Kadis they would have nothing but the wilderness around them, and certainly no very hostile peoples in their rear. A good general like Moses would scarcely have chosen a bad position for his camp, and the probabilities therefore are that the more western 'Ain Kadis is really the Kadesh Barnea of the Bible.

From 'Ain el Weibeh we descend into the broad valley of the Arabah, and, mounting the opposite banks, enter Edom by the Nemelah Pass, and reach Petra by way of the magnificent ravine called the Sîk (see page 219). Edom is that narrow strip of country between the Arabah and the Derb el Hajj, or Pilgrim Road to Mecca; it extends northwards from Akabah, the ancient Elath, on the Red Sea to Wâdy Kerek, which formed the ancient boundary between it and Moab. The district is divided into two parts, the northern portion of which is now called Jebâl, the Gebal of the Hebrew, known to the ancient Romans as Gebalene. The southern portion is called Esh Sherah, and corresponds to the Mount Seir of the Bible. The capital city was called in Hebrew, Sela, “the rock” (2 Kings xiv. 7), and still bears the equivalent Latin appellation of Petra, although the natives speak of it as Wâdy Mûsa, or “the Valley of Moses.”

Edom consists of a range of porphyritic rock covered by a mass of sandstone coloured with the most warm and vivid tints. On either side rise limestone hills, those on the east forming the outpost of the great plateau of the Arabian Desert, while the lower range on the west forms the eastern bank of the Arabah, which valley skirts the south country and the Bâdîet et Tih, or “Desert of the Wanderings.” The district is very fertile, the valleys being

watered by pleasant streams and filled with trees and flowers, and the uplands furnishing rich and plentiful pasture interspersed with cornfields. Before the difficulties of ocean travel



ROCK-CUT TOMB OR TEMPLE, PETRA.

Eighty-five feet in height. It is called by the Arabs El Khūzneh Far'on, "the Treasure of Pharaoh," which is said to be concealed in the urn-shaped finial at the summit. The portal leads into a lofty chamber twelve yards square.

were overcome and the desert was the direct and easiest road to the East, Edom was a flourishing country and its capital one of the world's great centres of commercial activity. From the earliest times the Midianites and Ishmaelites conveyed the products of Arabia through this province to Egypt in caravans (Gen. xxxvii. 28), and bartered them for manufactures and other commodities of the realm of the Pharaohs. From the second century before Christ the region was inhabited by the Nabathæans, of whose extensive civilisation there are still abundant traces to be seen in the inscriptions and architectural remains which cover the country. In 105 A.D. Edom became a Roman province, and Petra became an even more important city than before. Christianity was introduced there at a very early period, and Bishops of Petra are mentioned as having attended some of the Councils of the Church. By the fourth

century the commerce had been diverted, the Arabs encroached upon its territory, and anarchy, neglect, and wanton violence soon brought about the fulfilment of the prophecy

that the inheritance of Esau, which was once "the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven from above" (Gen. xxvii. 39), should become "a desolation" and a curse. The northern part, El Jebâl, is inhabited partly by fellahin, or peasants, and partly by the Bedawin tribe of the Hejaya. Esh Sherah belongs principally to the Hawetât and 'Ammarin Arabs (the latter being probably the representatives of the ancient Amorites), and the powerful but lawless tribe of the 'Alawin, who have obtained from the Egyptian



DETACHED TOMBS, PETRA.

Isolated masses of rock, from fifteen to twenty feet square. In one of them there is a small sepulchral chamber. The background represents the excavations in the cliffs opposite to the Amphitheatre.

Government the privilege of escorting pilgrims and travellers. Petra and its immediate neighbourhood is in the hands of a turbulent but interesting tribe called the Liyatheneh. They are more fellahin than Bedawin in character, and have a singularly Jewish type of

countenance. Indeed, they are in all probability the descendants of one of the Jewish tribes who emigrated from Arabia after the conquests of Islam. Besides their Hebrew physiognomy they retain many distinctive Jewish customs to the present day. After the fourth century Petra disappears from history, and it remained absolutely unknown until an Arab of Esh Sherah described its ruins to Seetzen, in the year 1807. In 1812, Burckhardt, under great difficulties, reached the place and fully explored it.

Petra lies in a valley running from north to south, and about three-quarters of a mile long. At the northern end it is five hundred feet wide, and narrows to half that breadth at the south. This is called by the Arabs Wâdy Mûsa, "Moses' Vale," from a tradition that the spring 'Ain Mûsa, from which the stream takes its rise, was the same which gushed forth when Moses struck the rock. The valley is enclosed on all sides by precipitous sandstone rocks of variegated hues, and presents the appearance of having been originally an inland lake. The first thing which strikes the spectator in Wâdy Mûsa is the magnificent colour of the rocks; the stone where the surface is old and weathered is of a deep chocolate hue, but where it has been more recently cut or excavated it assumes bright red or yellow tints, relieved here and there by white, the general effect being that of gorgeous watered silk.

The effect on entering the city is most imposing; the chief monuments being hewn in the solid rock, and the most elaborate façades, pediments, pilasters and all, strictly monolithic. The valley was no doubt occupied in the earliest times by the cave-dwelling tribes who are spoken of in the Bible as Horites, and their dwellings have been enlarged and ornamented by the later inhabitants and used for houses, temples, and tombs. In some of the caves, notably at the smaller and less-known rock-cut towns which still exist in the neighbourhood, though unknown to travellers, the walls and ceilings are decorated with elaborate and graceful patterns painted in distemper, as bright and fresh as though they had been but lately finished. One ceiling at El Bârid, which was discovered by the late Mr. Drake and myself, is painted with festoons of grape-vines and convolvuli, with Cupids playing among the branches. The design is evidently Roman, and is extremely well executed. A smaller ravine branches off to the left by the village of 'Aireh, spanned over with an arch which carries an aqueduct. It is called Kantaret Bint Far'on, "Pharaoh's daughter's arch," and the ascent to the east is also named Besâtin Far'on, or "Pharaoh's gardens," nearly every grand or mysterious piece of architectural work in the country being attributed to the Egyptian monarch. At the entrance of the gorge on the south-west side of the valley are some tombs entirely detached from the rock, which has been hewn smooth behind them (see page 213), and calling to mind the ancient sepulchres in the Valley of Jehoshaphat at Jerusalem (see pages 82 and 83, vol. i.). The buildings of the city have nearly all disappeared, the largest and most important of the ruins being that known as Kâsr Far'on, or "palace of Pharaoh," probably a temple, situated near the entrance of the valley from the west. A little to the east of this is a triumphal arch, farther still a solitary column called Zibb Far'on, on the south, which apparently once formed part of a church, the apse of which may still be traced. To the

west of this rises a lofty hill, upon the summit of which stands what is supposed to be the acropolis or citadel of Petra.

The architecture of Petra belongs to the debased Roman style which was in vogue in the third or fourth centuries of the Christian era, when the severe simplicity of the classical period had given way to florid decoration and harmony of design was sacrificed to striking effect. The Sîk is one of the most beautiful and picturesque ravines in the world (see page 219). We enter by a narrow passage running between lofty perpendicular cliffs of magnificent red sandstone, and spanned by a broken archway, now quite out of reach, which once carried an aqueduct from the heights above. A clear and sparkling stream ripples along the bed of the ravine, fringed with oleanders and other shrubs, while creepers hang in graceful festoons from the rugged walls. As we advance the gorge grows narrower and grander. In the walls are several square cuttings which once held tablets, and some small ornamented niches, no doubt intended for dedicatory altars, of the same pattern as those found at Bâniâs and elsewhere (see page 111, vol. i.). Beneath these are some imperfect Greek inscriptions. At a point in the Sîk where the ravine takes a sharp turn we come upon one of the most remarkable monuments in Petra, namely, the Khûzneh Far'on, or "Pharaoh's Treasury," excavated in the solid rock and surpassing all the other tombs and temples in beauty of colour and execution (see page 212.) The façade is of a deep but delicate rose colour, which shines out in strong relief against the deep reddish-brown of the uncut rock around it and the bright green of the oleanders and other shrubs that grow beneath. The façade of the temple consists of a portico originally of six columns, but one of them has now broken away. The four middle pillars support a pediment; on the apex of this is an ornament which has been variously described, but which a more careful inspection proved to be a lyre. Above the whole is a very curious piece of ornamentation: a second pediment, the width of the whole façade, is supported by two pilasters at either end; the pediment has then been cut through on each side of the centre, and the block so left has been fashioned into a cylindrical ornament surmounted by an urn. The cylinder and the recesses have then been furnished with pilasters and dressed to correspond with the front portions. This pediment, which is thus divided into three portions, presents nine faces of rock, each having a pilaster on either side, and on these are sculptured female figures with graceful flowing drapery. The curious device was in all probability adopted to admit of the symmetrical arrangement of *nine* figures—those, I take it, of the nine Muses. The lyre, the emblem of Apollo, being also introduced, lends colour to the supposition that it was dedicated to those divinities. The mysterious excavation, then, is nothing but the *Musæum* of Petra—not what the Turks would call an "antiquity house," but the "philharmonic institution" of the place.

The next most important monument is, perhaps, the amphitheatre, which is entirely hewn out of the solid rock (see page 216); it is thirty-nine yards in diameter, and contains thirty-three tiers of seats rising one above another, and capable of accommodating from

three to four thousand spectators. The view from the highest tier is magnificent, and embraces almost all the excavated parts of the valley (see page 213). In the wall of rock behind the theatre are some boxes, or *loculi*, which, perhaps, existed as caves in the face of the rock before the amphitheatre was excavated. Immediately opposite to the theatre are some tombs with beautifully executed fronts, the first of which contains a curious arrangement of graves, or *loculi*. These are cut in the floor of the cave, and are so placed as to make the most of the room, no regard being paid to the direction in which they lie. On the wall to the left are some rudely cut representations of the sepulchral



THE ROCK-HEWN AMPHITHEATRE, PETRA.

Thirty-three tiers of seats rise one above another, and above the seats there are chambers hewn in the rock. The brook of 'Ain Mûsa, bordered with verdure, flows across the arena.

monuments in favour with the Nabathæans, something between an obelisk and a pyramid, and beneath these are two inscriptions in the Nabathæan character. A little farther on is a finely carved temple, which originally contained six caves or recesses; these have since been made into three, and fashioned into apses at the end, so as to form a Greek church of the usual pattern. A Greek inscription in red paint records the fact of its consecration, but the date is unfortunately illegible. Each tomb or cave has its owner, who dwells there with his family in the cold or wet weather.



J. D. WOODWARD. PINXT.

C. BERTRAND. SCULPT.

ENTRANCE TO THE VALLEY OF PETRA.





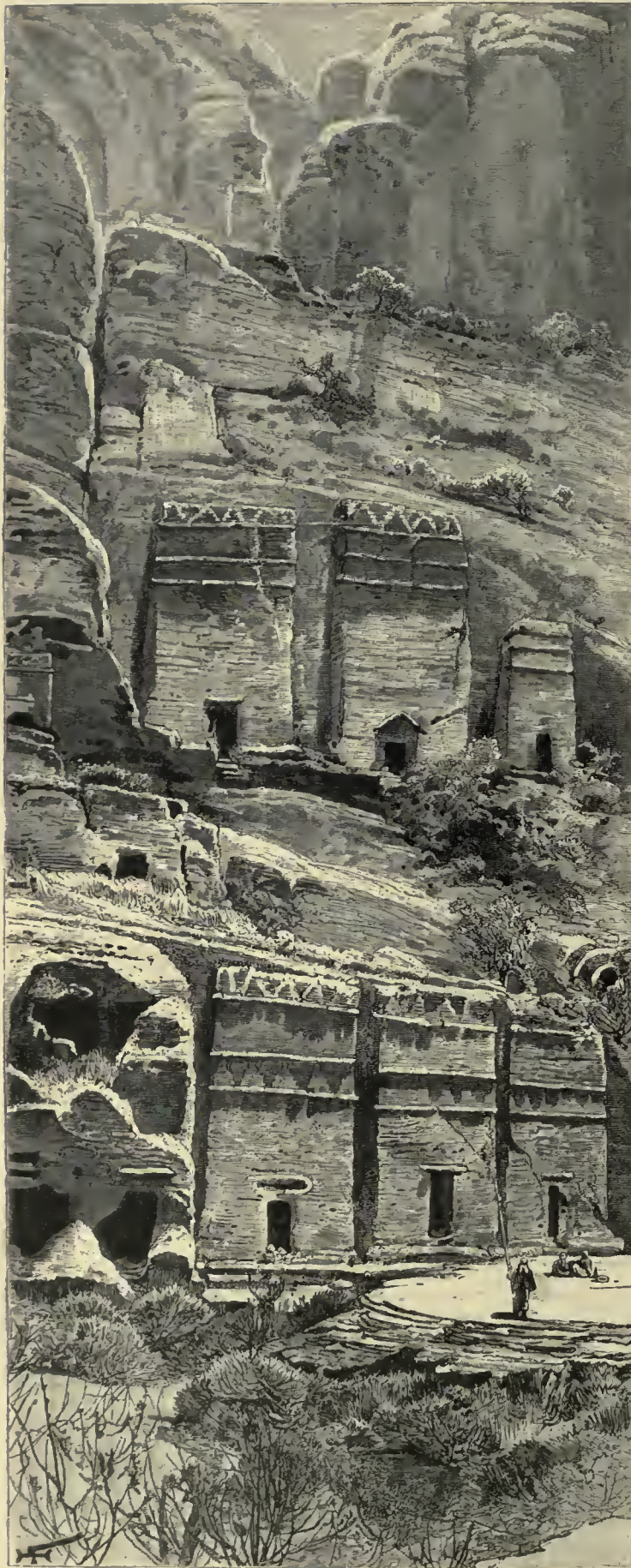


MOUNT HOR.

The scene of the death of Aaron, called by the Arabs Jebel Harûn, "the Mount of Aaron." Its highest point is about four thousand three hundred and sixty feet above the sea-level.

MOUNT HOR AND THE CLIFFS OF EDM.

THE steel plate facing this page will convey some idea of the grandeur of the famous defile, which was the chief and probably the only usual approach in ancient times to the deep valley hidden in the heart of the mountains of Edom where the city of Petra once stood, but which now contains only its site, strewn with ruins and surrounded by rock-cut tombs and temples. This wonderful ravine (*Es Sîk, the cleft*) approaches the valley of Petra from the east; it is about a mile and a half in length, and winds continuously, taking unexpected turns, as if it were the most flexible of meandering rivers instead of being a chasm in a mighty mountain wall. About fifty feet from the eastern entrance to the defile a picturesque arch (shown on the steel plate, and alluded to on page 215) is thrown across from one precipice to the other, at a great height. Immediately beneath the spring of the arch, on each side, niches enriched with pilasters, evidently intended for statues, are sculptured in the face of the rock. At this point the cliffs are from eighty to a hundred feet in height, and the chasm is not more than twelve feet wide. This is one of the narrowest parts of the chasm, but it does not become much wider for a considerable distance. The bottom of the ravine, watered by



ROCK-CUT TOMBS, PETRA.

Used as dwelling-houses by local tribes in cold or wet weather.

the brook from 'Ain Mûsa in the winter, descends rapidly on its winding way towards the west, and the sides become proportionately higher, varying from one hundred to two hundred and fifty feet or more in height. The near approach of the precipices to each other cause them to appear to be much higher than they are in reality. Irby and Mangles estimated them at from four hundred to seven hundred feet in height, and Mr. Stevens regarded them as from five hundred to one thousand feet high. They are everywhere perpendicular, and the effect of the narrow strip of blue sky seen from the gloomy depths below is very striking. In some places, however, the cliffs overhang to such a degree that, without actually meeting, they almost shut out the view of the sky for a hundred yards together. Suddenly a flood of light streams across the ravine from a deep gash in the cliffs on the north side and on the south side simultaneously, and beyond it the beautiful rose-coloured temple known as Khûzneḥ Far'on (described on page 215) appears, carved in a cliff of the southern chasm, facing the east (see page 212). From this point the defile, pierced on each side with tombs and caves innumerable, turns towards the north-west until it opens into a little glade overgrown with oleanders and tamarisk bushes (see page 219), a favourite haunt of the present inhabitants of Petra, and close to some tombs, which serve as con-



CLIFFS OF THE SÎK, PETRA.

Showing the western outlet of the great defile opposite to the rock-cut amphitheatre represented on page 216.

venient dwelling-places (see page 218). The rock-hewn amphitheatre is just below, towards the north (see page 216). Beyond it the cliffs, still honeycombed with caves and tombs, once more approach each other, till a little farther to the north they at last open into the valley of Petra. The bed of the winter torrent pursues its way, and as it crosses the valley winds among the ruins of the city of Petra, and then enters a defile in the western hills.

From the west-north-west corner of the area a steep ravine ascends into the heart of the mountains and leads to one of the most important monuments of Petra, Ed Deir (the Convent), hewn in the face of a perpendicular rock, which forms one of a group projecting from the lofty tableland of Edom. The long ascent by which this now isolated temple is approached is for the most part along the edge of a precipice, which is carefully hewn, where the rocks admit of it, into a continuous staircase, the steps of which are in more than one instance marked by inscriptions in the so-called Sinaitic character. After many windings among tangled thickets and round great blocks of sandstone, a platform two hundred and sixty feet square, partly formed by excavation of the rock and partly by masonry, is reached; on the northern side of it stands the Deir, withdrawn between two gigantic walls of cliff (see page 221). It is of greater magnitude than the Khūzneh (see page 212), being upwards of a hundred feet in height. The capitals of the columns and the cornices have, apparently, never been completely finished. In the interior, facing the entrance, is a recess a little above the floor, with a dais in front of it, and a few steps leading up to it on each side. A rude staircase leads to the roof of the Deir, and on the rocky platform with which the roof communicates is a circle of hewn stones, and again, still beyond, is a solitary cell, hewn in an isolated cliff and joined to this platform by a narrow isthmus of rock. It is said that the Deir stands more than a thousand feet above the level of the valley basin of Petra, and the few travellers who have visited it speak highly in praise of the picturesque view which its terraced roof commands. From it can be traced the entire length of the steep defile, by which alone it can be approached, winding among perpendicular rocks; while nearly the whole extent of the site of the once splendid city of Petra can be distinguished below. Towards the south-west, the summit of Mount Hor (see page 217), called by the Arabs Jebel Harûn (the Mountain of Aaron), appears beyond the intervening cliffs. The domed wely over the traditional grave of Neby Harûn (the prophet Aaron) can be discerned on the highest point of the sacred mount.

On the levelled surface of a rock immediately opposite to and facing the Deir there are the remains of what must once have been a stately temple. The bases of the columns of the portico and colonnades on each side are still *in situ*, and in a vault beneath David Roberts, the artist, saw a capital of one of the columns, which he describes as being "of white marble and in the best taste."

The incidental references made by Josephus (Ant. IV., iv. 5, 6, 7) to Idumea and Petra, in connection with his account of the death and burial of Miriam and her brother Aaron, are very striking, and in conjunction with the Bible narrative lend special interest to these now

desolate lands, and help us to repeople them in fancy with their ancient inhabitants and the wandering hosts led by the Lawgiver.

“When Moses together with his whole army came to the borders of Idumea, he sent



THE DEIR, PETRA.

An isolated building on a lofty eminence north-west of the valley of Petra. It faces Mount Hor.

ambassadors to the king of the Idumeans, and desired him to give him a passage through his country, and agreed to send him what hostages he should desire, to secure him from injury. He desired him also that he would allow his army to buy provisions, and if he insisted on it

he would pay down a price for the very water that they should drink. But the king was not pleased with this embassy from Moses; nor did he allow a passage for the army; but brought his people armed to meet Moses, and to hinder them, in case they should endeavour to force their passage. Upon which Moses consulted God by the oracle, who would not have him begin the war first; and so he withdrew his forces, and travelled round about through the wilderness (see Numbers xx. 17—21). Then it was that Miriam, the sister of Moses, came to her end. They made a public funeral for her at a great expense. She was buried on a certain mountain which they call Sin, and when they had mourned for her thirty days Moses purified the people. . . . Now when this purification was over, he caused the army to remove and to march through the wilderness and through Arabia, and when he came to a place called Arke, *but has now the name of Petra*, at this place, which was encompassed by high mountains, Aaron went up one of them (see page 217), in the sight of the whole army; Moses having before told him that he was to die, for this place was over against them. He put off his pontifical garments and delivered them to Eleazar his son, and died while the whole multitude looked upon him. He died in the same year wherein he had lost his sister, on the first day of the month of Abba" (see Numbers xxxiii. 38).

In the time of St. Jerome a shrine, said to be the tomb of Miriam, was shown near Petra (the Kadesh Barnea of early Christian tradition), but the site of this traditional tomb has not been identified. It is distinctly stated in Numbers xx. 1 that Miriam died at Kadesh and was buried there. Josephus states that her death took place on the first day of the lunar month of Xanthicus, and, as Dean Stanley says, "this seems to imply that the anniversary was still observed in his time," and pilgrimages were probably made to the real or supposed tomb. Dean Stanley suggests that the place of sepulture of Miriam was the mountain height crowned by the above-described monument Ed Deir (see page 221), and it is certainly quite possible that the tomb known to Jerome as the grave of Miriam may have been on this spot. Its remarkable position, and the laboriously constructed rock-cut stairway leading to it, tend to prove that it was a pre-eminently "sacred place," and the inscriptions above alluded to indicate that it was a place of pilgrimage in early Christian times.

To the little white-domed wely, which is said to mark the burial-place of Aaron, on the summit of Jebel Neby Harûn (the Mount of the Prophet Aaron), pilgrimages are made to this day by Jewish and more especially Muhammedan devotees. That this venerated mountain is identical with the "Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom," described as the scene of Aaron's death, is now the general opinion. In Hebrew it is called הֹר הָהָר, literally "Hor, the mountain." If, as Gesenius explains, "Hor" is only an archaic form of "Har," the usual Hebrew term for "mountain," then it means simply "the mountain of mountains." It well deserves the epithet, for it rises high above the surrounding mountains and cliffs of Edom, and may easily be distinguished, even from a distance, by its twin peaks (see page 217). The shrine of Aaron stands on the higher peak, which is in the form of a truncated cone, and is separated from the less elevated peak by a little plain in which grows a solitary cypress-tree.

The highest point of the mountain is said to be four thousand feet above the level of the sea.

Owing to the frequent contentions which take place among the local tribes of Arabs, and their somewhat capricious dealings with strangers, travelling in the land of Edom is rather difficult, and the ascent of Mount Hor is occasionally rendered impossible.

The late Mr. James Finn, during his residence in Palestine as H.B.M. Consul, did much to facilitate expeditions to Petra and Mount Hor, by personally visiting these places and making arrangements with the sheikhs of local tribes for the safe conduct and escort of English travellers for a fixed sum per head. He thus describes his approach to and ascent of Mount Hor:—

“April 4th. At length we were upon the great plain of the Wâdy 'Arabah, or 'Wilderness of Zin;' and our path was to be diagonally across this, pointed direct to Mount Hor.

“April 5th. . . . Distances are hard to judge of in such extensive plains and in so clear an atmosphere. We had been travelling nearly two days with Mount Hor in sight, straight before us; yet the mountain only grew in size as we approached it, not in distinctness. As we came near to the eastern mountains, we found innumerable and huge blocks of porphyry rock scattered over the ground. . . . We turned off from the Wâdy 'Arabah by the Wâdy Tayibeh, which runs south-east into the heart of the mountain. We ascended a series of precipices, and at a quarter before four caught the first glimpse of Aaron's tomb, and at five pitched our tents on the rugged side of Hor, among crags and scented plants, enlivened by numerous cuckoos and the sweet warbling of one little bird. During the last hour we had seen some blue pigeons, one partridge, and, separately, two large eagles, to which our attention had been drawn by their shadows moving on the ground before us; then on looking upwards, the royal birds were seen sailing along, silently and slowly, against the blue vault of ether.

“April 6th. In the morning we advanced upwards towards Aaron's tomb, sometimes clambering on our hands and knees. We had to rest occasionally in the shade of large trees of 'arar (juniper). The *ret'm* (a large kind of broom) was very abundant and covered with white blossom, shedding the richest perfume.” [This is the *rothem*, רֹתֶם of 1 Kings xix. 4, 5, mentioned as having sheltered Elijah. It is the largest shrub of Sinai, *Genista monosperma*.]

“The mountain is all of dark red colour; and the higher we ascended, the more difficult we found the progress to be. At length all further advance seemed impossible, till, on looking round, we observed an excavation for a well, with masonry around it; and beyond this were steps cut into the rock, which rock was sloped at an angle of between fifty and sixty degrees. This encouraged us to persevere. Still higher I picked up some tesserae of mosaic and morsels of marble and alabaster. At length we attained the highest peak, where there was scarcely more space than sufficient to contain the small wely.” [An oblong stone structure surmounted by a dome plastered and whitewashed.] “On entering we found near the door a common-looking tomb, over which was spread a pall of silk, striped in red, green, and white, but much faded. Against a pillar which supports the roof were hung rows of coloured rags

and threads of yarn, with snail-shells and sea-shells among them by way of further ornament. A wooden bowl at one end of the tomb was probably intended to receive alms for the support of the devotee who claims the place, and who practises the curing of diseases by charms among the wild Arabs. The floor of the chamber has been handsomely paved with tessellated bits of coloured marble, much of which still remains. Over the tomb are suspended some ostrich eggs on a line, as is common in Oriental churches, and near it is a mihrab, or niche in the wall, to indicate the southerly direction for Muhammedan prayers.

"In a corner of the floor a flight of steps leads down to a crypt; and providing ourselves with a light we descended thither. But we only found an iron grating swinging loose to the touch, and within it a plain wall, from which part of the plaster having fallen away allowed to be seen the corner of a kind of stone sarcophagus. The portion visible was not, however, sufficient to enable us to judge of its probable era. The ceiling of the crypt is



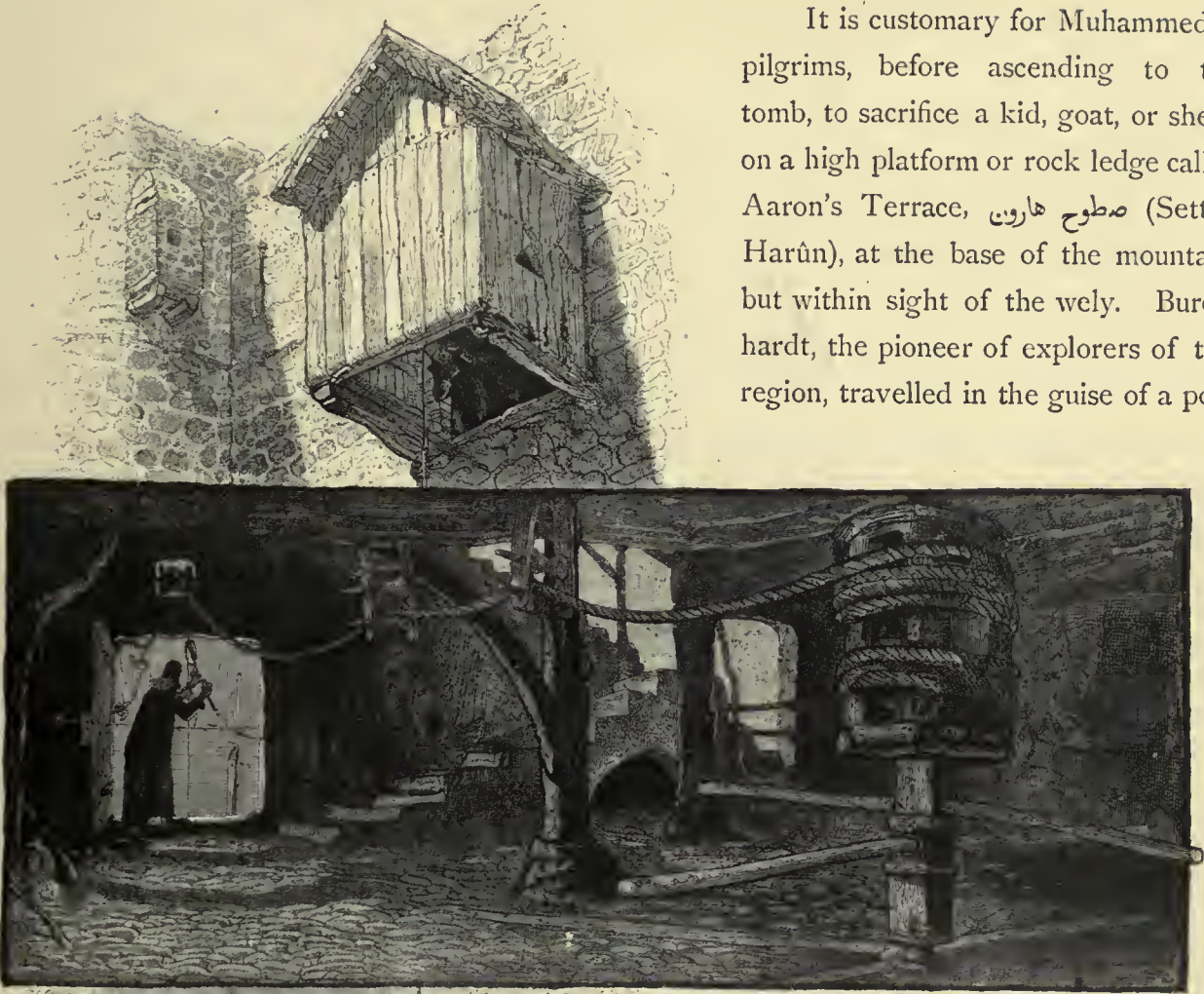
JEZIRAT FAR'ON, THE ISLE OF PHARAOH.

At the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah, as seen from the western shore. The castle which crowns it was built by the Crusaders; the mosque and other Saracenic structures are attributed to Saladin.

blackened by the smoke of lamps. I then mounted by the outside of the building to the top of the dome. I utterly despair of being able to describe the prospect around; and can only say that extensive mountain peaks lay in

lines below, and might be compared to those made upon embossed maps, but that the whole scene was vast, savage, and abandoned to sombre desolation, both the hills and the desert, in every direction. I could see nothing of Petra, so deeply sunk is that valley between the hills." [From this point, however, the Deir (see page 221) is visible on the hill to the east-north-east, and in clear weather the Red Sea and the Dead Sea can be plainly distinguished.]

"Descending the mountain by the opposite side of that of our arrival, namely, on the side next Petra, we discovered that more pains in road-making had been bestowed there, and that the ascent in that direction would be comparatively easy. Cuckoos and partridges were heard plentifully, and on looking back I saw a very large raven hovering over the wely."



It is customary for Muhammedan pilgrims, before ascending to the tomb, to sacrifice a kid, goat, or sheep on a high platform or rock ledge called Aaron's Terrace, *مصطوح هارون* (Settûh Harûn), at the base of the mountain, but within sight of the wely. Burckhardt, the pioneer of explorers of this region, travelled in the guise of a poor



LETTER OF ADMISSION TO THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.
Formerly travellers were drawn up into the convent through the pent-house shown above; now, however, if the letter thus received is found satisfactory they are admitted by a side door.

Muhammedan pilgrim,' and hired a guide east of Petra to lead him through the city to Aaron's shrine that he might sacrifice there, and thus it was that he contrived to see the wonders of the valley. The guide led him to Aaron's terrace. Burckhardt killed the goat at a spot where he observed a number of heaps of stones. While he was in the act of slaying the animal his guide called out, "O Harûn, look upon us! it is for you we slaughter this victim! O Harûn, protect and forgive us! O Harûn, be content with our good intentions, for it is but a lean goat! O Harûn, smooth our path, and praise be to the Lord of all creatures!" This

he repeated several times, after which he covered the blood that had fallen on the ground with a heap of stones. They then dressed the best part of the flesh for supper as expeditiously as possible, for the sun had set, and the guide was afraid of the fire being seen and attracting robbers to the spot.

A camel path runs in a south-westerly direction from the southern base of Mount Hor, and leads down through green winding wâdys and rocky passes into the Wâdy el 'Arabah. From this point the route southward to the Gulf of 'Akabah (see page 224) occupies three days.

The Arabic word *عربيه* "Arabah," signifies *rapid river* (and probably at an immeasurably remote period a "rapid river" flowed along this valley from the Lebanon to the Red Sea), but the precisely corresponding word in Hebrew *עֲרָבִי* signifies *desert*, and this is a perfectly appropriate definition for the great wâdy bound on the east by the rugged slopes and cliffs of Edom and on the west by the horizontal limestone ranges of the Tih. It is truly "a land not sown" (Jer. ii. 2). Its bed is mainly composed (as Mr. Finn describes) of "sand and pebbles, in different proportions in different places, sometimes the sand predominating and sometimes the pebbles, with occasionally an abundance of very small fragments of flint serving to give a firmer consistency to the sand. Round boulders are also met with on approaching the hillsides. In some places large drifts of soft yellow sand are wrinkled by the wind, as the smooth beach is by the ripples of a receding tide."

But even here sweet-scented shrubs and a few stunted thorn-trees, especially the mimosa (*tühl*), contrive to grow. The *nebk*-tree, too, is common, and the Arabs can subsist for many days on its small insipid fruit, called *dôm*. The colocynth creeps along the sand here and there, and one plant will yield as many as thirty or more "bitter apples;" when ripe the leaves and plant die away, leaving the golden-coloured fruit (the size of an orange) on the sand. The Arabs make no use of it. Tufts of fine grass and a few wild flowers spring up in this desert year after year. Mr. Finn mentions "a starry flower, called *dibbaih*, not unlike a wild pink, which is eaten by the Arabs, both petals, calyx, and stalk."

My brother, Mr. E. T. Rogers, of Cairo, in a letter describing a journey in the 'Arabah, says: "When travelling quickly and noiselessly we came now and then upon flocks of gazelles browsing on the short tufts of herbage, and occasionally a hare was seen. Jerboas started from under our camels' feet and ran about on four legs for a few seconds, and then commenced a series of leaps on their hind legs, till they could regain their holes or till otherwise out of sight and danger. It was interesting, too, to watch for footprints in the sand; we recognised the marks of the long-pointed cloven foot of the ibex and the large paws of the hyæna; in one place we noticed the double footprints of the wolf and the gazelle, with the sand thrown up at every step, as if there had been a chase."

The bed of the 'Arabah gradually rises towards the south till it forms a ridge known locally as the Shrag er Rishéh (saddle-bag of feathers), said to be the water parting between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of 'Akabah. The valley is here about five miles in width, but narrows to four miles where it meets the gulf. It slopes towards the west, so that when the

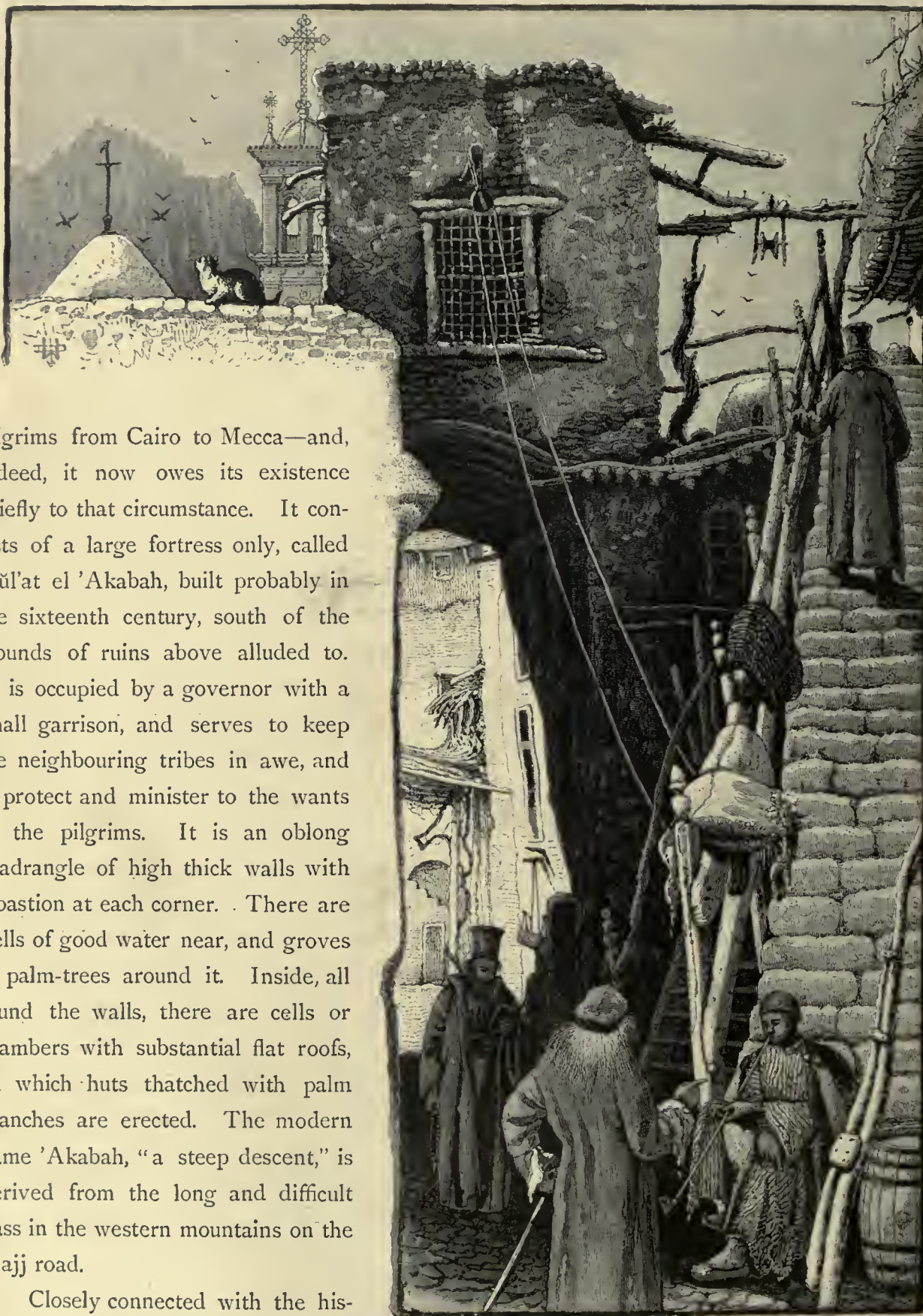
winter torrents rush down from the chasms and wādys of Edom and from channels in the western hills, they form a little watercourse along the western side of the valley and enter the Gulf of 'Akabah at its north-west corner. The mountains on the east are two thousand to two thousand five hundred feet, and those on the west fifteen to eighteen hundred feet in height.

It is recorded that "King Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion Geber, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom" (1 Kings ix. 26). Of this ancient seaport there is now no vestige left; but its site has been identified with the position of a spring of brackish water called 'Ain el Ghūdiān, and opposite to a wādy of the same name which runs from the western hills into the great valley of the 'Arabah, at a point which is now nearly ten miles from the sea-shore, but which must have been the northern point of the Red Sea, "in the land of Edom," in the time of King Solomon. (A somewhat similar change in the position of the sea margin is said to have been observed at the head of the Gulf of Suez.) The identification of the site of Ezion Geber does not, however, rely on the configuration of the valley or on the existence of the springs of brackish water at this point. The nomenclature is regarded as the proof, for, though in appearance so different, the word Ezion, in its original-Hebrew form, and the Arabic word El Ghūdiān, are actually identical, letter for letter; and they correspond phonetically, as Professor Palmer observes, with "Diana," the Latin form of the name as it appears on the Peutinger Tables.* It is there shown that "Diana" (Ezion) was sixteen Roman, that is fourteen and a half English miles from "Haila" (Elath), which agrees with the position assigned to the former at El Ghūdiān.

There has never been any doubt respecting the position of Elath; its site is still marked by extensive mounds of rubbish at the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah, on the eastern curve of the bay. In the history of this place there is scarcely a missing link since Solomon used it as his seaport. In the reign of Ahaz it was conquered by the Syrians and the Jews were driven from it (2 Kings xvi. 6). It is mentioned frequently by Greek and Roman writers under the name of Ailah and Ælena, and was the station of a Roman legion. In the days of Jerome it still traded with India. On the approach of the victorious army of the followers of Muhammed in A.D. 630, John, the Christian King of Ailah, submitted voluntarily to the conquerors, and secured peace by payment of tribute. From this time the place declined, and Baldwin I., in the year A.D. 1116, with two hundred followers, took possession of it, having found it deserted. Saladin (Salāh-ed-Dīn) regained it in 1167, and it was never fully recovered by the Crusaders, though the reckless Raynald of Châtillon seized upon the town and held it for a few days.

Aileh, or 'Akabah Aileh, as the modern representative of the ancient city of Elath is called, is one of the chief stations on the route of the Egyptian Hajj—the yearly caravan of

* This remarkable work owes its name *Tabula Peutingeriana* to Peutinger, a scholar and statesman of Augsburg, who was long its possessor. It is a rude chart or delineation of the military roads of the Roman empire, with the distances between the towns, constructed not later than the fourth century. By some authorities it is believed to date from the reign of Alexander Severus, A.D. 222—235. The present copy, the only one known to exist, appears to have been made in the twelfth or thirteenth century. It is a long narrow chart wound on rollers, and is preserved in the Imperial Library at Vienna. It has been of great value to students of biblical topography, and a fac-simile of it has been published.

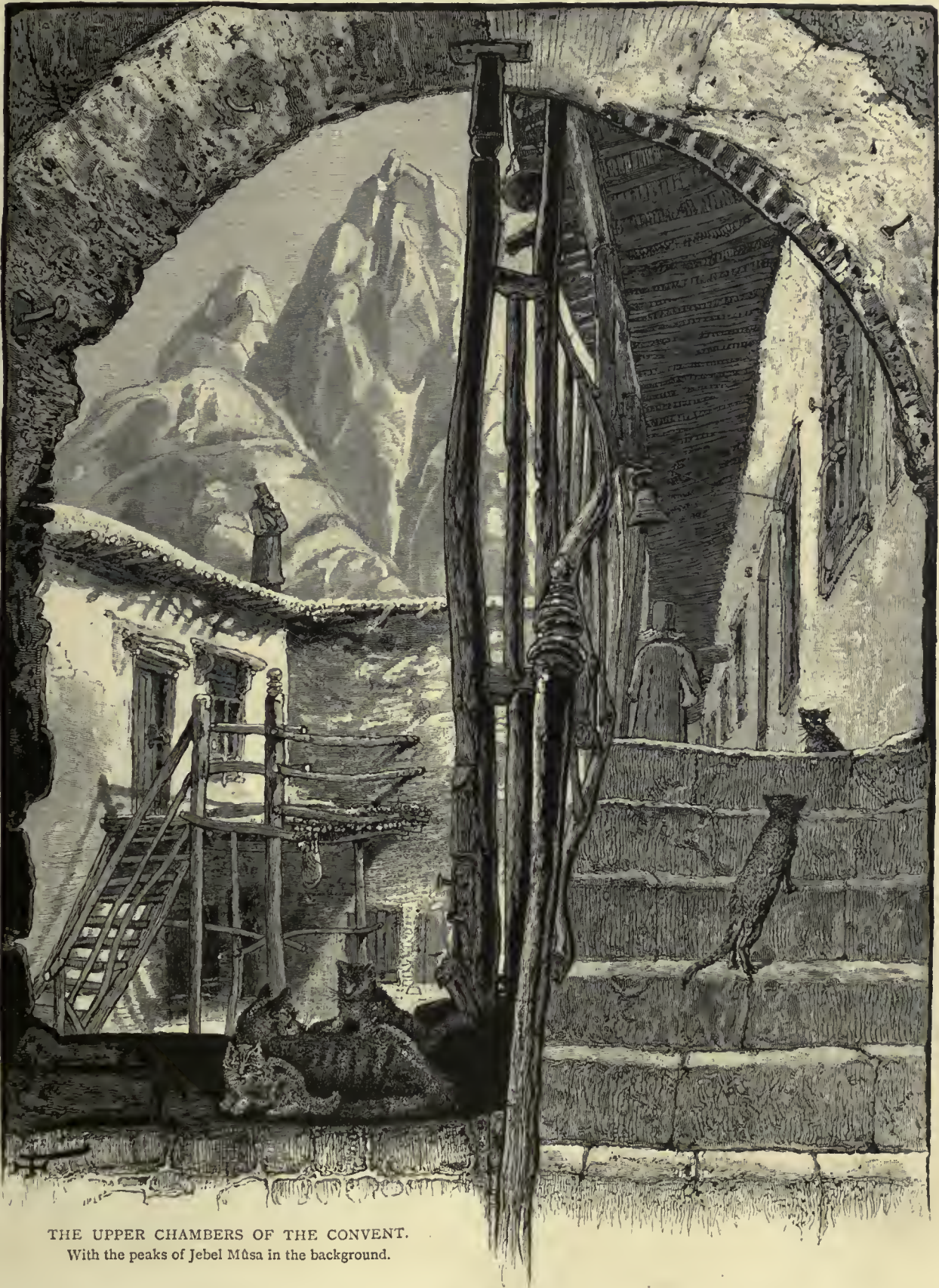


pilgrims from Cairo to Mecca—and, indeed, it now owes its existence chiefly to that circumstance. It consists of a large fortress only, called Kūl'at el 'Akabah, built probably in the sixteenth century, south of the mounds of ruins above alluded to. It is occupied by a governor with a small garrison, and serves to keep the neighbouring tribes in awe, and to protect and minister to the wants of the pilgrims. It is an oblong quadrangle of high thick walls with a bastion at each corner. There are wells of good water near, and groves of palm-trees around it. Inside, all round the walls, there are cells or chambers with substantial flat roofs, on which huts thatched with palm branches are erected. The modern name 'Akabah, "a steep descent," is derived from the long and difficult pass in the western mountains on the Hajj road.

Closely connected with the history of 'Akabah (Elath) is the picturesque Jezirat Far'on (Island of

A PEEP INTO ONE OF THE COURTS OF THE CONVENT.
Showing a rude flight of steps leading to the upper chambers. On the left the summits of the belfry of the church and the minaret of the mosque may be seen.

Pharaoh). It is about nine miles south-south-west of the fortress of 'Akabah, and half a



THE UPPER CHAMBERS OF THE CONVENT.
With the peaks of Jebel Mûsa in the background.

mile or less from the opposite or western shore, whence the view on page 224 is taken.

Captain R. F. Burton, who has recently visited it, says that the people of 'Akabah call it simply *Jebel el Kūlat* (Mount of the Fort). It has had a puzzling variety of names attributed to it—variations of the words *El Kurey* and *El Kureiyeh*, meaning "the village," or "the ruin." Laborde calls it *El Graic*. It is a grey granite rock, dyked with decaying porphyritic trap, and everywhere veined with white and various coloured quartzes. The shape is a long oval of about three hundred and forty by one hundred and fifty yards, and it consists of two stony mounds united by an isthmus. The northern peak is the higher, and rises about a hundred yards above the sea-level. It is encircled with barrier reefs of coralline. At the extreme north there is a tower, and on the northern mound, which is scarped here and there, stands the castle keep, defended by an enceinte. In the highest part there is a carefully cemented underground cistern, in which there are two pointed arches divided by a tall column. Below there is a small harbour, and the pier leads to a covered way enabling the garrison safely to circulate round the base of the island. The southern knob supports similar but inferior constructions.

Captain Burton, from whose account the above description is gleaned, says: "The castle is evidently European, built in the days when the Crusaders held *El 'Akabah*; but it probably rests upon Roman ruins, and the latter, perhaps, upon Egyptian remains of far older date. The Saracenic buildings may date from the reign of *Salāh-ed-Dīn* (*Saladīn*), who drove out the Crusaders in 1167 A.D." In the year A.D. 1182 the island was unsuccessfully besieged by *Raynald of Châtillon*, and in the time of *Abulfeda* (about 1300) the island was already abandoned and the governor transferred to the castle on the mainland—*Kūl'at el 'Akabah*; thus all the important structures must have been erected prior to that date. For centuries it has been either utterly deserted or used as a place of refuge or abode by pirates and fishermen.

THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.

THE Caravan or Hajj route of Christian pilgrims from Syria and Palestine to the Convent of St. Catherine and the "holy places" in its neighbourhood, runs from the Valley of the 'Arabah round the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah, and winds along its western shore. Travellers who approach the Sinaitic peninsula from the north-east, instead of from Suez, usually follow the same route, traversing the shell-strewn sands at the foot of a mountain wall of grey granite intersected at intervals by stony wādys strewn with gravel.

At the mouth of the broad and barren Wādy *Merākh*, within sight of *Jezirat Far'on* (see page 224), the traveller is compelled to change his escort, for here the territory of the *Haiwat* tribe of Arabs terminates, and that of the great *Tawarah* tribe commences. For some distance south of this point the road passes over high promontories stretching far into the sea.

The Land of Midian, on the opposite or eastern side of the gulf, can be plainly seen. Far inland, and tinged light blue by the distance, rise the sharp and saw-like crests of

El Sharâf, and a sandy plain (called by the Bedawîn "Tihâmat Madyan") slopes from them towards the shore cliffs. The Hajj route to Mecca can be distinguished running diagonally in a south-easterly direction across the plain, from Hakl, a pilgrim station on the sea-shore, towards the distant mountains. The Christian Hajj road pursues its way southwards along the widening sandy shore, till at a short distance south of the great chasm of Wâdy Wetir, and just opposite a brackish fountain surrounded by dwarf palm-trees, called 'Ain en Nuweibi'a, it turns abruptly from the sea-shore and enters the great mountain range by the picturesque ravine, Nûkb el Abweib (the little door). From this point the convent is about fifty miles due south-west, and the camel road approaches it in as direct a line as is possible in a land of mountains and precipices. After traversing the Wâdy Samghi, it issues out into a plain of sandstone veined with granite and deoderite, then it runs through wâdys and over steep slopes to another plain, El Ghor, soon passing near to 'Ain el Hûdhera, which probably represents Hazeroth (Numbers xi. 35). In its neighbourhood there are several connected wâdys called Mawârid el Hûdhera (paths to Hûdhera), indicating that it was once an important place. After crossing the Wâdy Mûrrah, the road runs along the wide plain of Wâdy Sa'al. Here *seyal* or *tûhl* trees (acacias) grow to a considerable size, with thin foliage and a multitude of thorns. From them gum arabic is sometimes gathered. The road now enters a narrow branch of Wâdy Sa'al, a gloomy valley shut in between high desolate mountains of granite, veined with porphyry and slate, and here and there crested with sandstone, all entirely destitute of vegetation; a few scattered shrubs and herbs, however, grow in the bottom of the valley. Emerging from this wâdy, the road rises over a rocky pass to the summit of a ridge, said by Robinson to be the water-parting "between the waters flowing to the Gulf of Suez and those running to the Gulf of 'Akabah." It presently descends to the Wâdy Suweiriye, in which there is a well with enclosed gardens near it, called Abu Suweiriye. This wâdy enters the broad Wâdy esh Sheikh (Sâleh), near to a Muhammedan wely, four thousand four hundred and seventy-nine feet above the sea, dedicated to Neby Sâleh (the prophet Sâleh), who is highly revered by the Bedawîn. Like the generality of welys, it is a cubical structure covered with a dome and whitewashed. It contains a cenotaph with numerous votive offerings suspended above it, consisting chiefly of tassels, shawls, ostrich eggs, camels' halters and bridles. The Tawarah Bedawîn (the Bedawîn of Tûr, *i.e.* Sinai) regard Neby Sâleh as their ancestor; he was probably, however, the celebrated Muhammedan prophet of the same name, who at an early period was renowned for his eloquence, and who is extolled in the Koran as one of the most venerable of patriarchs (see Sale's Koran, chap. vii., called "El Araf." In the notes to this chapter will be found the curious legends concerning Sâleh).

Every May a great festival takes place at the shrine of Neby Sâleh, accompanied with sacrifices, feasting, and games, at which women are also present; and a smaller festival is held immediately after the date harvest. At the close of the proceedings all present ascend to the summit of Jebel Mûsa, and there offer sacrifices to Moses. From the shrine of Neby Sâleh



VIEW FROM THE NORTH-EASTERN GALLERIES.

Showing the lofty chamber of the south corner. A monk at a lower window is striking a piece of suspended iron with a hammer, to call the fraternity to prayers in one of the numerous chapels.

the heights of Jebel Mûsa are visible. The road gradually ascends as it traverses the Wâdyesh Sheikh, and finally turns into the Wâdy ed Deir, when suddenly the great convent is revealed to view; but from this point only its high north-western wall and its extensive gardens can be seen, as shown in the vignette on the title-page of this volume.

The convent is an irregular quadrangle, enclosed by lofty walls built of blocks of granite, except the upper courses, which are composed of a mixture of granite, sand, and gravel, cemented together by mud, which has acquired great hardness. The walls are protected by several towers, and the south-eastern wall is scarped. The valley in which the convent stands is so narrow at the bottom, that while its north-eastern wall runs along the water-course, the main body of the building is on the slope of the mountain, so that the south-western wall lies considerably higher than the north-eastern. In the north-eastern wall there is a wicket gate covered with a pent-house, about thirty



INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.

The framework of the door leading into the nave is richly decorated ; its panels are embellished with enamels. From the ceiling hang numerous silver lamps and ostrich eggs, suspended by long cords.

feet from the ground, through which travellers were formerly drawn up into the convent. As the traveller approaches its walls, his Bedawy attendants hasten forward, and standing beneath the pent-house, shout out, "Ya Mûsa! Ya Mûsa!" ("O Moses!"), this being the name of the porter now in office. Presently a turbaned head peers out, then a rope with a basket attached to it is let down; in this the letter of introduction, or pass from a branch convent, is placed, and quickly drawn up (see page 225). The buttress near to this wicket was built by General Kleber, the commander of the French troops during their occupation of Egypt. A tablet let into the wall commemorates the restoration of the building by that commander.

Presently an iron gate, which leads into a courtyard between the garden and the convent, is opened, and the candidate for admission is welcomed by the *Æconomos*, or bursar of the convent, and probably received with an embrace and a kiss. His Arab attendants and camels are left outside to bivouac in the valley (see page 238), while he is led into the convent through a low door in the north-west wall near to an entrance, now built up, which was formerly used for the admission of high dignitaries, and called Bâb er Râs, or the Abbot's Gate. The space enclosed within the convent walls is cut up into a number of irregularly shaped small courts, by ranges of buildings running in all directions, forming quite a labyrinth of narrow winding passages ascending and descending (see page 228). In one of these courts there is a well with a few apricot-trees near it, in others a few flowers or vegetables are planted, and ancient vines appear in several places running over rude trellis-work. There are many isolated upper chambers approached by rickety wooden stairs or ladders (see page 232), and apartments are perched high up, projecting over the walls at the west and south corners (see vignette on the title-page). A long row of cells, half of which are reserved for the use of pilgrims and travellers, are built along the north-west wall, and open into a covered corridor or gallery constructed of wood and approached by two flights of stone steps (see page 229). The wall facing the top of the first flight of steps is pierced with loopholes, through which glimpses may be caught of the broad plain of Er Râhah (see page 238). In these are set the ordnance of the convent. Everything bears the mark of high antiquity, being apparently the patchwork of various bygone centuries.

Besides the great Church of the Transfiguration which, with its handsome new bell-tower, stands in the midst of these buildings, close to a now rarely used mosque (see page 235), there are several small chapels or oratories dispersed over the convent, in which masses are occasionally said. The ordinary mode of calling the fraternity to prayers is by striking with a hammer a piece of iron, like part of the tire of a wheel, more or less bent, and suspended by ropes (see page 232). A flat piece of granite, thus suspended and struck with a wooden stick, serves the same purpose, producing a ringing sound. There is an example of this kind of bell hanging by the doorway of an oratory on page 228, and in the lower stage of the great bell-tower there is a long plank of wood which, on being struck, can be heard all over the convent. Bells are only rung on church festivals and occasions of rejoicing, or to show respect to some high dignitary.

The Church of the Transfiguration is an early Christian basilica, traditionally ascribed to Justinian, and the interior is a very imposing specimen of Greek ecclesiastical decoration (see page 233). The church is entered by a porch, and a flight of steps descends beyond it. Each of the lofty walls, bearing the entablature of the nave, rests on thick columns of granite, the capitals of which are adorned with boldly executed foliage. The aisles are lighted by five Byzantine windows on each side, and are covered by a sloping roof; the west window over the entrance is in the form of a cross, and is shown on this page. The beautiful rounded apse is adorned with mosaics of great value, executed by European artists as early as the seventh or eighth century.



THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS.

The belfry of the church and the minaret of the mosque, standing so near to each other within the convent walls, produce a singular effect, and strange to say the former is of very recent construction, while the latter dates from an early period.



unshod. In a court not far from the east end of the church there is a well of good water, called the Well of Moses, pointed out by the monks as the one at which Moses watered the flocks of Jethro's daughter.

The library of the monastery occupies the two lower floors of a building near the church. Its greatest treasure now is the famous Book of the Gospels, dating from the time of Theodosius III., A.D. 766, written on white parchment, both sides of each sheet having two columns in golden uncial characters. It was at this convent that M. Tischendorf dis-

The most important of these is the Transfiguration of Christ, or, as the Greeks call it, "the Metamorphosis," in memory of which the convent was originally consecrated. At the corners of this are two medallions, said to be portraits of Justinian and Theodora.

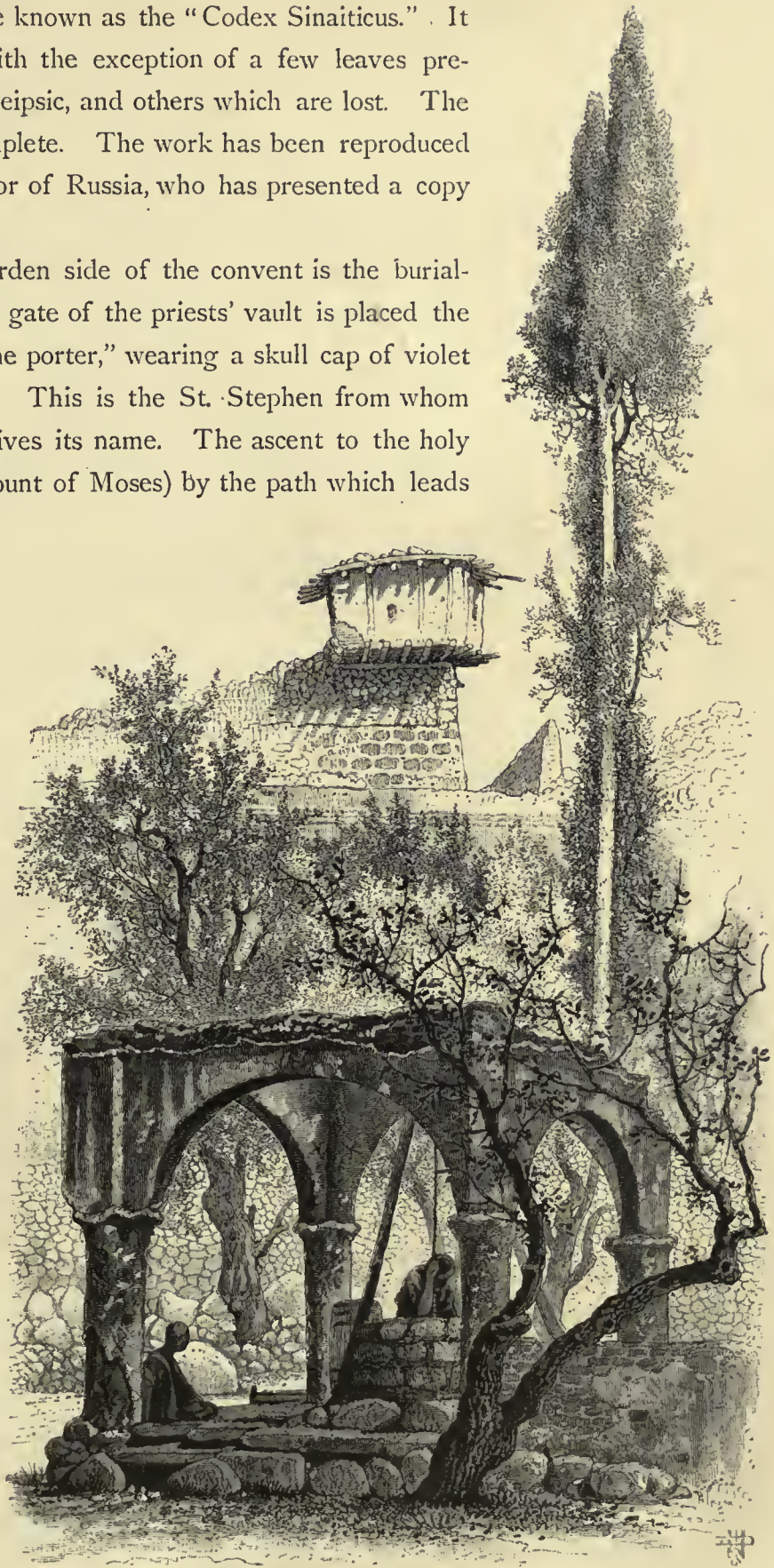
The Chapel of the Burning Bush, at the back of the apse, is probably the oldest part of the building. The spot where the bush is said to have stood is indicated by a plate of chased silver. A light is kept perpetually burning in this sanctuary, and it may only be entered



GATE OF ST. STEPHEN THE PORTER.
An archway on the ascent to Jebel Mûsa, where pilgrims formerly confessed before they visited the sacred heights.

covered the copy of the Bible known as the "Codex Sinaiticus." It is now at St. Petersburg, with the exception of a few leaves preserved in the University at Leipsic, and others which are lost. The New Testament is quite complete. The work has been reproduced at the expense of the Emperor of Russia, who has presented a copy to the convent library.

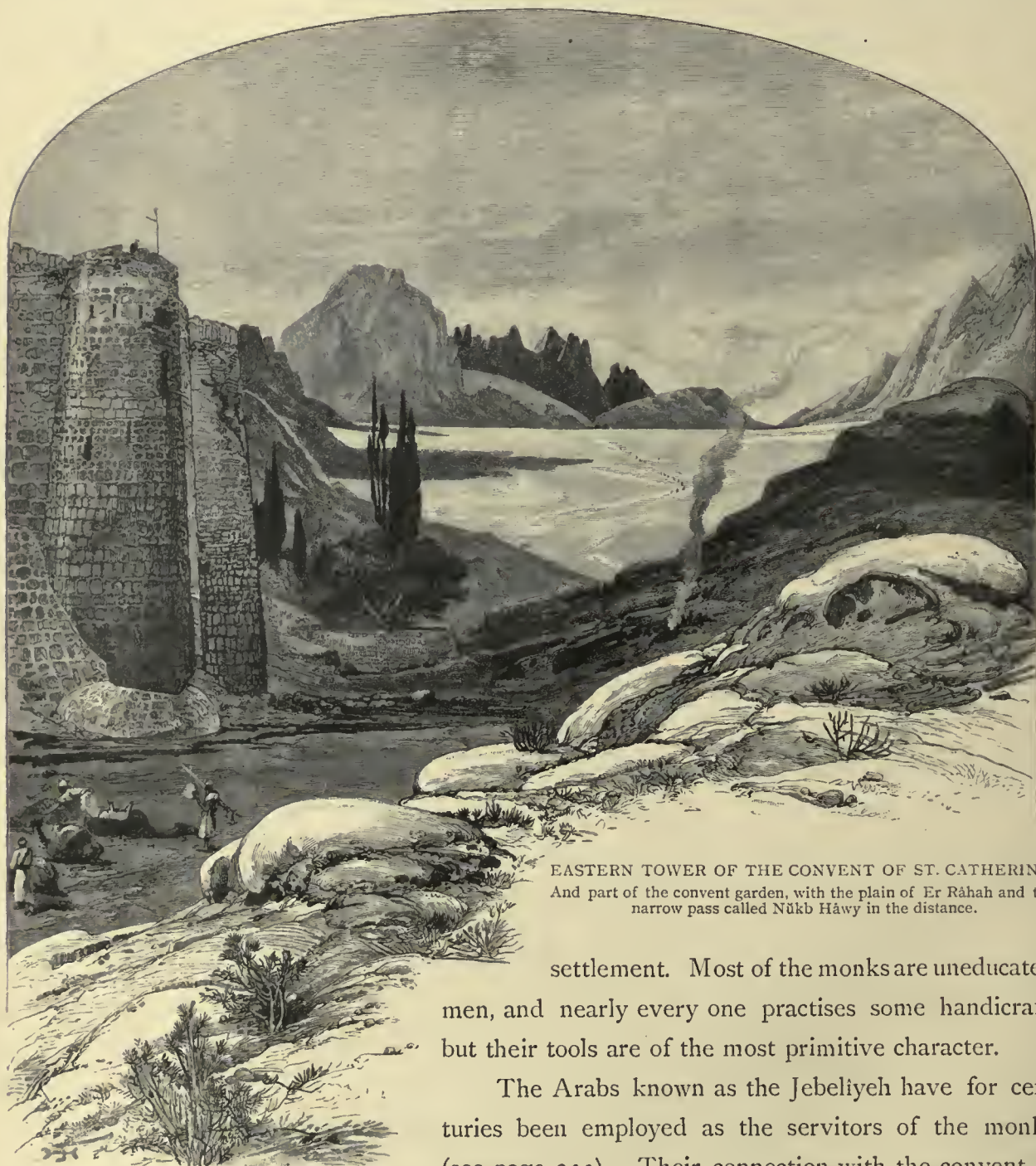
On the north-west or garden side of the convent is the burial-place of the monks. At the gate of the priests' vault is placed the skeleton of St. Stephanus "the porter," wearing a skull cap of violet velvet; he died in A.D. 1580. This is the St. Stephen from whom the archway on page 236 derives its name. The ascent to the holy places on Jebel Mûsa (the Mount of Moses) by the path which leads through this gate is said to be not very difficult, for its three thousand steps are kept in tolerably good repair. The first object of interest on the way is 'Ain Mûsa (the spring of Moses), which runs from beneath a great boulder. Higher up is the Chapel of the Virgin; at this point the road turns to the right, and, after a steep ascent, passes through a cleft in the rock spanned by the arch known as the Gate of St. Stephen the porter, for here it is said he used to sit (in the same attitude in which he now sits in the charnel-house), confessing pilgrims, and giving them passes to the sacred heights, so that they might proceed on their way chanting the words, "Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in His holy



WELL IN THE GARDEN OF THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.

This garden is north-west of the convent, and enclosed by a high wall. The lofty chamber at the north corner of the convent is shown above.

place? Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart." The Convent of St. Catherine belongs to the Greek Church, and is presided over by a non-resident archbishop, who is represented by a prior or agent, but the affairs of the convent are actually managed by an intendant. The monastic rules are very strict, and the convent is said to be regarded as a kind of penal



EASTERN TOWER OF THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE,
And part of the convent garden, with the plain of Er Râhah and the
narrow pass called Nûkb Hâwy in the distance.

settlement. Most of the monks are uneducated men, and nearly every one practises some handicraft, but their tools are of the most primitive character.

The Arabs known as the Jebeliyeh have for centuries been employed as the servitors of the monks (see page 233). Their connection with the convent is very singular. They are said to be descended from one hundred Roman and one hundred Egyptian slaves, who, with their wives and children, were presented to the convent as retainers by Justinian. Although originally Christians, they could not be prevented by their monastic masters from embracing Muhammedanism, but they do not make much use of the mosque (see page 235), which was built in the fourteenth century to propitiate the rulers of the land.

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The *Line Engravings* have ever been an attraction of the ART JOURNAL. The chief pictures in the English Galleries have at different times been engraved specially for it, and the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Turner, Landseer, Wilkie, Mulready, with the principal works in the National Gallery and South Kensington Museum, have been published. At the present time the Line Engravings are devoted to selected pictures of the Contemporary School of Painting, and embrace prints after Sir Frederick Leighton, P.R.A., J. E. Millais, R.A., Briton Riviere, A.R.A., E. J. Poynter, R.A., Alma Tadema, R.A., John Pettie, R.A., W. Q. Orchardson, R.A., &c., &c. These are engraved by eminent engravers, such as Lumb Stocks, R.A., Herbert Bourne, W. Miller, Charles Cousen, &c., &c.

The *Fac-similes*, by the newly discovered process known as Photogravure, are taken from drawings in the Royal Collection at Windsor (by special permission of Her Majesty the

Queen) and the British Museum National Collection (by special permission of the Trustees), and also from drawings and pictures by modern artists, executed specially for the ART JOURNAL.

Engravings of *Statues* form one of the occasional attractions of the JOURNAL, and the works of all the famous sculptors have from time to time been published.

In every number there are several fully illustrated Articles on topics of the time, written by acknowledged authorities on the subject, the engravings being executed by the most eminent wood engravers.

There are also each month a variety of Essays on Art matters, such as philosophic inquiries into the principles of Art, and biographical and other sketches of artists, with full details of the chief pictorial exhibitions throughout the world. The Art Notes and News is of the latest date up to going to press, and will be found fuller and later than any other monthly periodical.

THE ART JOURNAL PROGRAMME FOR 1883.

WHILST it is a comparatively easy task, in the early years of a magazine, to sketch out new lines of departure and to discover ways in which improvements may be effected, startling alterations in one which has, for nearly half a century, secured the confidence of a great and widespread public cannot be so readily undertaken.

The Proprietors feel that subscribers of long standing, living in every quarter of the globe, under very diverse conditions of Art Progress, have good right to claim that no violent change shall be made in its cosmopolitan character.

At the same time they consider that they are only consulting the wishes of their readers if they avail themselves of any methods which enable the varied phases of Art to be presented in a more attractive and perfect manner.

For this reason during 1881-2 Etchings and Fac-similes of drawings have taken the place of a portion of the line engravings, of which every year it is more difficult to obtain fine examples, owing to the gradual retirement of the best engravers, and the lack of able craftsmen to take their place. To this difficulty is added the increased diffidence which the Proprietors feel in asking owners of pictures to lend their works for the length of time requisite to produce a fine line engraving, at a time when demands are so much more frequently made, than was formerly the case, for loans by town and country exhibitions. Nevertheless, they are loth to curtail a form of illustration in which their magazine has stood pre-eminently alone.

The *Line Engravings* in the volume for 1883 will be selected from the celebrated pictures purchased by the Royal Academy under the Chantrey Bequest, at present exhibited in South Kensington Museum. These pictures have all been painted during the past few years, and are thoroughly representative of contemporary British Art. Among those for which arrangements have been made to engrave are—

“A Visit to Æsculapius,” by E. J. POYNTER, R.A.

“Their only Harvest,” by COLIN HUNTER.

“The Swineherd,” by C. E. JOHNSON.

“The Waning of the Year,” by ERNEST PARTON ; &c.

The following are also in preparation :—

- "Christ in the Carpenter's Shop," after J. E. MILLAIS, R.A.
- "The Knuckle-Bone Player," after Sir FREDERICK LEIGHTON, P.R.A.
- "The Fox and the Geese," after BRITON RIVIERE.
- "The Princes in the Tower," after J. E. MILLAIS, R.A.
- "Refurbishing," after P. H. CALDERON, R.A.
- "Home Again," after E. A. WATERLOW.

The *Etchings*, which have caused a large increase in the circulation of the Journal, will, in 1883, commence with "Cowdray," by SEYMOUR HADEN, and be continued by a number of the highest class plates by the most eminent Etchers.

Special attention will be directed to the *Wood Engravings*, and early in the year, by permission of the Trustees of the National Gallery, illustrations of the pictures acquired for the nation during 1882, including those purchased at the Hamilton sale, will be included.

It is intended to give, in each month during the year, an illustrated article on *The Year's Advance in Art Manufactures in England and France*, which will be written by independent and well-qualified authorities.

Amongst other matters it may be mentioned that Her Majesty the Queen, and Sir Fred. Leighton, P.R.A., have lent pictures to illustrate a life of a very interesting artist—the late George Mason.

Provincial Art will occupy each month as usual a considerable portion of the Journal.

Artists will find in the ART JOURNAL every information as to forthcoming Exhibitions and other matters of importance to them.

The first ten volumes after 1839 are now out of print, and the publishers are willing to purchase complete sets. All the remaining volumes may be had, together or separately, handsomely bound, price £1 11s. 6d. each; or with gilt edges, £1 15s. each.

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One Hundred Proofs are printed from the original plates of each Etching. They are printed on large paper, and are mostly published at 21s. each on the first of the month in which the subject appears in the ART JOURNAL.

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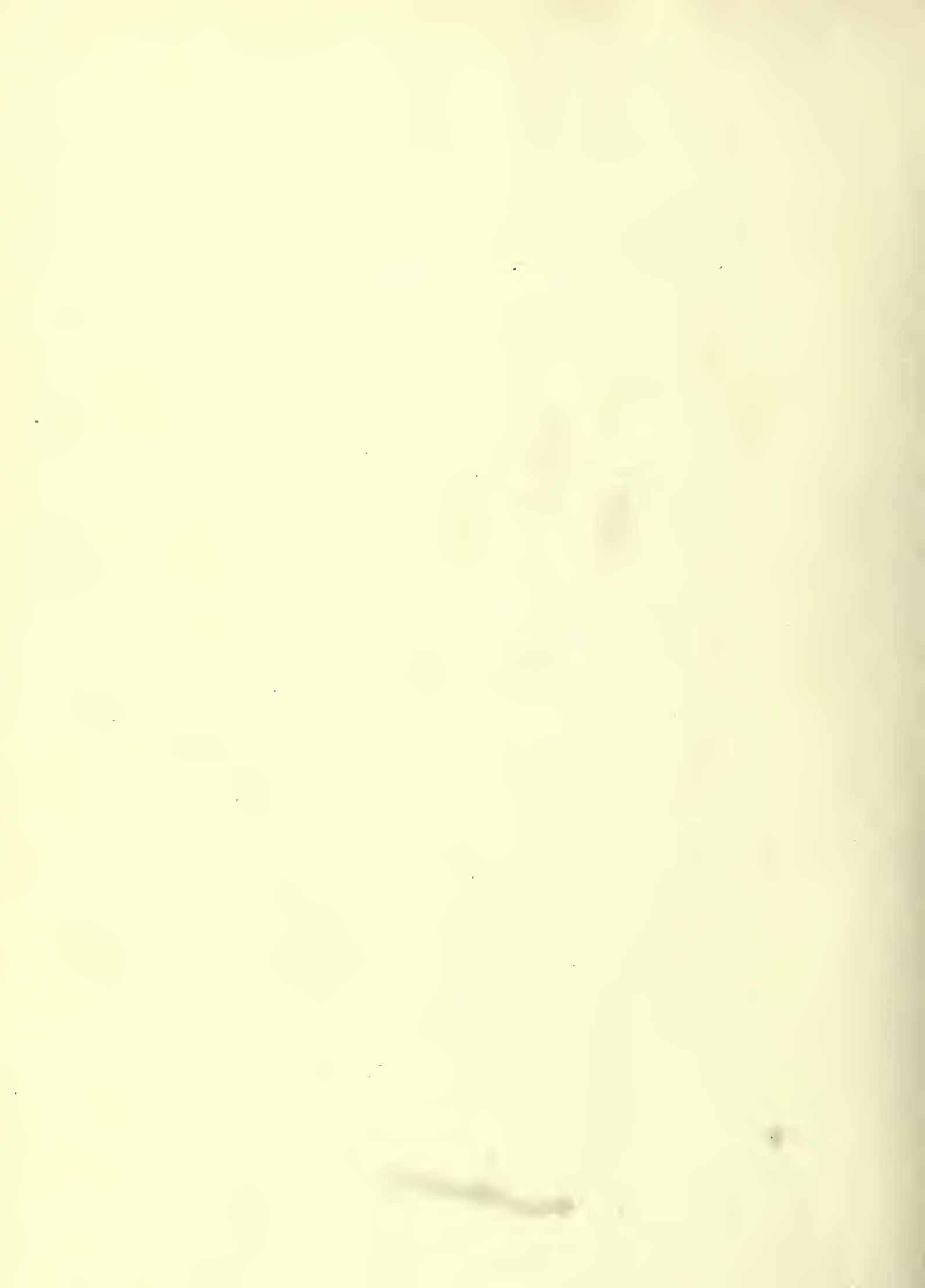
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